

**NATION OF ISLAM**

**Cult of the Black Muslims**

**May, 1965**

**Federal Bureau of Investigation  
United States Department of Justice  
John Edgar Hoover, Director**

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## PREFACE

A monograph entitled "The Nation of Islam" issued in October, 1960, examined the background, organization, activities, and violent nature of this fanatical, all-Negro cult in the United States which is based on a distorted interpretation of the religious principles of Islam and is motivated by hatred of the white race.

This new monograph has been compiled from both public and confidential sources to furnish additional information on this antiwhite group, which has received a considerable amount of publicity. Trials have occurred involving prisoners who claimed their religious rights were denied them during their incarceration; law enforcement officers have been harassed and assaulted by lawbreakers who claimed to be Black Muslims; and Nation of Islam (NOI) members have engaged in verbal battles, as well as actual altercations, with former cult members.

Even members of leader Elijah Muhammad's own family have condemned him. "Black Muslims," since the assassination in February, 1965, of Malcolm X, who was the dissident number-two leader, has become a familiar term nationwide to many who before had never been aware of the group. His murder has deepened cleavages and multiplied allegations. Resulting publicity created national interest that in part benefits the NOI,

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because this publicity tends to magnify the cult's position out of all proportion to its importance.

The public news media generally refer to all Negroes claiming cult membership as Black Muslims, and this name apparently has been accepted by Elijah Muhammad and the NOI, but attention should be given to the fact that not all persons classified by the press as Black Muslims are actually members of the NOI.

This monograph will clarify some of the distorted images of the cult and reveal the true consequence of this organization.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### A. Summary

Elijah Muhammad has continued as absolute ruler over the Nation of Islam (NOI) since he assumed the title of the "Messenger of Allah" following the disappearance of the cult founder, W. D. Fard, in 1933. Elijah Muhammad formulates and approves all NOI policy and maintains complete control over all funds and properties of the organization. Although he still lives in a luxurious style, his empire has been shaken by recent publicity concerning his immoralities involving many of his young secretaries and by the defection of several members of the cult hierarchy.

The expulsion in early 1964 of the former leading spokesman of the cult, Malcolm X Little, was the first outward sign of a growing dissidence among cult followers. Malcolm's expulsion was followed by the defection of two of Elijah's sons and a grandson. All had been cult leaders and all made many virulent accusations against their former leader, who had preached morality and promised wealth and an independent, segregated paradise to his Black Muslim adherents.

The last week of February, 1965, climaxed a hectic year for Elijah. The dissident Malcolm X was murdered on February 21 while standing to address a meeting of Negro nationalists in New York City. Immediately,

charges were made that Elijah had been responsible for this murder, and threats were made against Elijah's life. To further confuse the image of Elijah and his organization, a few days later at the annual convention of the NOI in Chicago, Elijah's dissident son Wallace apologized for his previous accusations against his father and was reaccepted into the NOI.

At present, approximately 5,000 cult followers attend meetings of the 37 numbered temples and 31 unnumbered groups, the majority of which are located in the East and the Midwest. Nearly half of the total membership belong to only six temples.

Each temple is led by a minister, a Fruit of Islam (FOI) captain, and as many other, lesser officials as are necessary. Within each temple, the male members compose the FOI and the females compose the Muslim Girls Training (MGT). Both are operated under strict, military-type discipline.

All NOI activities are keyed to the raising of money. Each member is required to contribute to several special funds of his temple. Each member's regular contributions vary among the individual temples from about \$6 to \$13.50 per week and are used to operate the local temple and to support Elijah and the national headquarters in Chicago. Other revenue to support "the Nation" comes from bazaars and rallies, sales of the cult newspaper, and from the profits of businesses run by the temples.

Since a large share of the money raised by the individual temples is forwarded to the Chicago headquarters, Elijah Muhammad has amassed considerable wealth and property.

Recently, Elijah inaugurated two new programs to which he requests his followers and other "so-called Negroes" to make contributions. The first is a "3-Year Economic Plan" designed to collect money with which to set up a Muslim bank as soon as \$1,000,000 has been contributed. His other program renews an earlier plan for an educational center to be built in Chicago. These new programs are given much attention in the cult newspaper. "Muhammad Speaks."

Elijah's teachings had been carried in other Negro papers which accordingly cult members had been required to sell; then, in the Fall of 1961, Elijah decided to start his own newspaper. "Muhammad Speaks" was a biweekly tabloid until February, 1965, when it became a weekly. Every issue contains by-line articles of Elijah and his featured columnists on certain phases of Elijah's teachings. Nearly everything printed in the paper tends to aggravate the soreness of race relations in the United States and throughout the world. Always, the white man is portrayed as the brutal oppressor and the black man, as the innocent victim.

Elijah recognizes the importance of publicity and uses it to aid recruitment. In NOI member Muhammad Ali--heavyweight boxing champion



Cassius Clay--Elijah has a widely publicized athlete whose devotion to the NOI is exploited for recruitment purposes. Elijah also broadcasts on radio, and he has advertised unsuccessfully by means of cards on public transportation vehicles.

During the past year, violence has erupted on numerous occasions between NOI members and "hypocrites," Elijah's term for dissident former members. Because of the many violent events of the past year, the security protection given Elijah, primarily ritualistic in the past, has become complete and serious.

Though Elijah Muhammad publicly denies that he teaches or advocates violence or disobedience to the "white man's laws," a militant approach is actually pursued through obstruction of police and prison authority, excessively harassing demands for the "religious" rights of NOI prisoners, and deliberate violations of the Selective Service Act.

#### **B. Conclusions**

1. The apocalyptic religious doctrine that Elijah Muhammad, the self-proclaimed "Messenger of Allah," espouses in the NOI is a distorted version of Islam.
2. Elijah's appeal to his Black Muslim followers lies not so much in the pseudo-Islamic religious aspects of his organization as in his strong condemnation of white society.
3. Because Elijah has been unsuccessful in recruiting educated Negroes to accept his teachings, the cult's future will depend

upon the success of his concerted appeal to the less-educated and less-privileged Negroes who are dissatisfied and frustrated with their lot in the United States.

4. Elijah's ambivalent teachings baffle his followers. In public, he vows that the NOI does not advocate violence, while in cult meetings he preaches antiwhite, anti-Christian, and anti-Government conduct and threatens the "hypocrites." Violence has erupted in the past and will continue as long as confusion, accusations, and doubts prevail.
5. The death of Elijah Muhammad would place the cult in a perplexing predicament. Elijah claims to be the last Apostle of Allah and has made no provisions for a successor; therefore, upon his death an opportunistic member who knows about the good life the NOI provides its leader undoubtedly would strive to supply his own "brand of concocted religious teachings" to justify assuming leadership of the Nation of Islam.

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## **I. ROLE OF FBI**

One of the FBI's many responsibilities is that of investigating members of "basic revolutionary organizations or groups" who are dangerous or potentially dangerous to the internal security of the United States.

Persons included under this responsibility are leading functionaries and active, militant members of the Nation of Islam (NOI), who because of their fanatical antiwhite and anti-United States Government teachings and beliefs would be potentially dangerous and likely to seize upon the opportunity presented by a national emergency to endanger the public safety and welfare.

Therefore, the FBI must determine the identities, whereabouts, and activities of these individuals constituting a threat to the internal security, and must develop sufficient information and evidence to sustain appropriate action against such individuals or to control their movements and activities in the event of a national emergency.

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## **II. BACKGROUND OF NOI**

A previous monograph explained how the Nation of Islam originated as one of many militant and cultist groups which had arisen in the northern industrial cities of the United States following World War I.

Briefly, the NOI, known at various times as Allah's Temple of Islam and the Muslim Cult of Islam, developed in Detroit, Michigan, out of the teachings of one W. D. Fard. Fard was a door-to-door peddler in the Negro neighborhoods of that city. To stimulate his sales, he told his customers that his products came from their home country from which he also had come. His rather mystic personality apparently entranced his customers, and before long he was instructing small gatherings with tales of their "true origin." In this way, the tenets of the cult were developed. Little factual data was ever learned concerning Fard; and after May, 1933, when ordered by local authorities to leave Detroit, he dropped out of sight and no trace of him has ever been found.

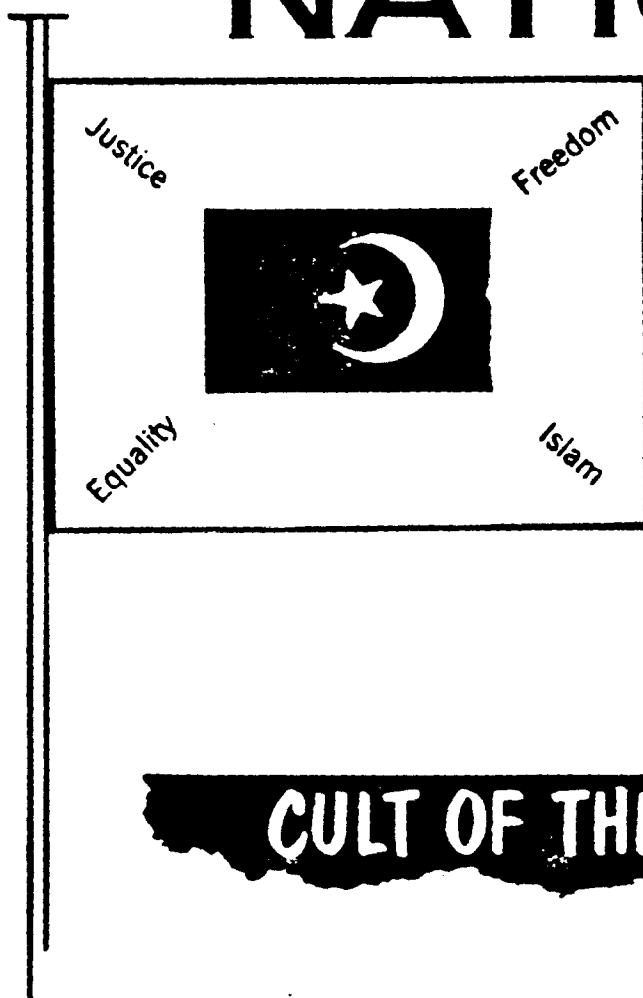
Following Fard's disappearance, one of his followers, a Georgia-born Negro named Elijah Poole, assumed leadership of the cult. Poole explained that Fard had been Allah himself, had renamed him "Elijah Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah," and had ordered him to continue teaching "the lost-found black people in the wilderness of North America."

Elijah was active in Detroit until late in 1934, when, because of trouble with local authorities over the operation of the cult school, he moved to Chicago. There, he established Temple No. 2, which became and remains the national headquarters of the NOI.

During the succeeding 30 years, Elijah Muhammad's teachings aroused the interest of many persons who joined the NOI. But Elijah's unorthodox approach and his demands for absolute control over the cult and its members disenchanted many after only short periods of membership. Still, the cult has a certain influence and a considerable following. There are now 38 numbered temples or mosques, one of which is inactive, and 31 unnumbered groups in the United States. Most are centered in the Midwest and the East, with a few groups in the South and a few in the Far West.

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# NATION OF ISLAM



**CULT OF THE BLACK MUSLIMS**



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
JOHN EDGAR HOOVER, DIRECTOR



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2. Monograph recommended by: R. W. Smith  
[REDACTED]
3. Monograph approved by: Mr. Tolson  
[REDACTED]
4. Purpose of monograph: To clarify the distorted image of this organization and to reveal its true consequence.
5. Monograph is part of a series.
6. Monograph will have current value as a reference work after a lapse of six months or a year.

### III. SIGNIFICANCE OF NOI

#### A. Conditions in United States Affecting NOI

What conditions prevail in the United States which allow this unusual organization its present-day appeal and notoriety? Why is the NOI seemingly more important today than at any time in its history?

Prominent Negro scholars point to a new assertive mood, frequently called "Black Nationalism," rising among the Negroes in this country. But Negro leaders differ in their interpretation and use to be made of this mood. However, into whatever causes they channel this mood, all recognize one common concept--the American Negro is a group with a heritage of suffering, taking action to force the white majority to recognize and fulfill its legal rights.

We observe this new mood in the actions and activities of the majority of the nonviolent demonstrations, such as school integration, voter registration, boycotts, et cetera, of the major civil rights organizations. The "Black Nationalism" of these civil rights organizations is expressed in their dedication to the integration of Negroes within the present framework of society.

However, despite avowals of nonviolence, there has been a growing militant tone to the activities of the Negro rights movements.



Public attention, therefore, has been increasingly focused on the most unorthodox Negro organization--the NOI, or "Black Muslims," whose particular form of "Black Nationalism" expresses itself in open denunciation of the white race and constant demands for complete separation from white society.

#### **B. Changing NOI Tactics**

During the 30 years that Elijah Muhammad has been absolute ruler over the NOI, changing conditions in the United States have noticeably altered the emphasis he has placed on the various aspects of his teachings. This change of emphasis has not reflected a change of policy but has been merely a response to external pressures and realities.

For some time, Elijah faithfully followed the original teachings of Fard, who preached that the black people of North America were not Negroes but were members of the lost tribe of Shabazz, stolen by white slave traders from the Holy City of Mecca many years ago, and that he himself had come to America to find and bring back to life his lost brethren, who must learn that they were the original people and must regain their true religion--Islam.

Elijah furthered Fard's avowal that Christianity was a tool of the white man formed for the sole purpose of keeping the original black man enslaved, and that only through following the laws of Allah would the

original people return to the Paradise from which they had been stolen.

Elijah indoctrinated his followers with the belief that the United States Government was of, by, and for the white man only, that the black people did not belong to America but were citizens of Mecca, and that, therefore, their allegiance belonged to the Muslim flag, which would give them freedom, justice, and equality, not to the American flag, which would bring them only slavery, injustice, and death.

By 1958, however, fearing possible Government prosecution, Elijah ordered his ministers to temper their militant teachings. Though not making any fundamental changes, he de-emphasized the religious aspects of the cult and stressed the economic benefits to be derived by those Negroes who joined the NOI.

During this same period, the NOI constantly emphasized the cult's efforts in the rehabilitation of Negro criminals, dope addicts, and alcoholics, by publicizing those who had joined the NOI and had bettered their position in society. The former leading spokesman of the cult, Malcolm X, who was assassinated in February, 1965, had been instrumental in spreading the claim that the NOI had had phenomenal success in rehabilitating these Negroes. Malcolm, who publicly acknowledged that he had been a narcotics addict and a criminal before joining the NOI, was a dynamic and evangelistic type of speaker who impressed many Negroes in the United States.

Still another change of NOI emphasis resulted from the steadily rising influence of the present-day Negro civil rights movement. This caused an increase of open NOI denunciation of other Negro civil rights organizations and the Negro Christian ministers who support them. Negro leaders of the civil rights groups are called by the Muslims "the blind leading the blind" and "puppets of the white slave masters." Negro Christian ministers are called "parasites living on the blood of their poor Black brothers," "tools of the white man," and "educated Uncle Toms."

An alliance between the NOI and the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) now and then has been rumored in the press. Again, a connection was reported following the rally in New York City on February 16, 1965, when the deposed Malcolm X charged that there was a conspiracy between these organizations that was "not in the best interest of black people." Malcolm's angry charge came just two days after his home had been damaged by fire bombs which he claimed were thrown on the orders of Elijah Muhammad.

Malcolm's charge of a conspiracy is not borne out by the facts. The NOI and KKK are mutually antagonistic on the race issue. The only aim they hold in common is complete separation of the races. Malcolm himself unproductively negotiated with KKK leaders in January, 1961, for land where the NOI could set up its own businesses, commerce, and government. On another occasion several months later, the minister of the Atlanta Temple

attended a public Klan rally and his presence was acknowledged by the Klan leader. The NOI minister was merely an observer and took no part in the rally, following which, he told newsmen he did not approve of the Klan. Still later in 1961, Elijah Muhammad told a group of his followers that a representative of the KKK had asked to come to an NOI meeting to tell how they supported Elijah's work. Elijah said that "if they showed up they would be carried out."

Not all NOI hatred is vented on other extremists, civil rights groups, and Christian ministers. The Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party\* are similarly denounced and avoided.

Dissident NOI members have reported that Elijah has denounced communism on many occasions while speaking at temple meetings. Elijah's denunciations are echoed in the statements of his ministers. One NOI minister told his followers, "The NOI does not favor the communists and will not have anything to do with communism. Muslims hate communists worse than the white people hate the communists and Russia. Communism is no good for anyone."

Noncooperation with any group of white people is the Black Muslim rule. The NOI prohibits its followers from participating in or lending support to any organization or meeting which non-Muslim Negroes or white people sponsor. For example, an NOI minister on the west coast had agreed to

\*Designated as subversive pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

participate in a labor forum in May, 1964. When he learned that Clifton DeBerry, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for President of the United States, also was scheduled to speak at the forum, the minister asked NOI headquarters if he might still take part. Denial was immediately forthcoming, and the minister cancelled his appearance.

### C. Communist Interest in NOI

The Communist Party, USA (CPUSA), while sympathetic to the NOI, has a current policy of advocating and supporting integration rather than segregation of Negroes and whites in this country. Ironically, the CPUSA for many years pursued an official policy of "self-determination," or a separate nation for American Negroes. In 1959, when the Party concluded that such a segregationist policy was inimical to communist interest in the civil rights movement, the Party changed its constitution. CPUSA spokesmen since that time have condemned the NOI and the former NOI figure, the late Malcolm X, as "ultrareactionary forces" among the Negro people, and once singled out Malcolm X as an "opponent of the Negro people."

However, the Party has recently moderated its attitude toward the NOI, and communist spokesmen now usually refer to the NOI program as being somewhat "Utopian" and "divisive," thus, not in keeping with communist doctrine. In this regard, the Party has stated that the NOI does not represent the large majority of Negroes in this country, who seek equality within the context of an integrated society.

While the Party does express sympathy for the NOI on the grounds that the capitalist system in this country is responsible for the conditions in which a protest movement such as the NOI can arise, the Party insists, of course, that only under communism will the Negro have full freedom. As a result, the Party is circumspect and has rejected a policy of active cooperation with the NOI.

In contrast to the CPUSA position is that expressed by one militant Marxist group, the Progressive Labor Movement (PLM),\* which follows a pro-Chinese communist line in this country. A leading figure in this movement, who was formerly in the CPUSA, stated after the Harlem riots of July, 1964, that the PLM was willing to work with any group in Harlem--Black Nationalist or Muslim included.

Several articles with a pro-Chinese communist slant appeared in "Muhammad Speaks" in 1964. These articles were undoubtedly published because the NOI considers the Chinese people to be "brothers," inasmuch as they also are non-Caucasian. One of the articles, prepared by Robert Williams, a Negro extremist who fled to Cuba to avoid prosecution for kidnapping and who, in his speeches and writings, advocates violence in civil rights efforts in the United States, described his visit to Red China. He stated that the "American of African descent, whether he understands enough to appreciate it or not, is very fortunate to have the support of the Chinese people."

\*Name changed to Progressive Labor Party in mid-April, 1965.

#### **D. American Negroes' Reaction to NOI**

A well-known Negro author has written: "It is an interesting historical phenomenon that when a people reach the precipice of despair, there is so often waiting in the bushes a savior--a messiah who promises to snatch them back from the edge of the abyss and turn their grief into greatness."

To some dissatisfied Negroes, Elijah Muhammad, the self-proclaimed "Messenger of Allah," appears to be this messiah. Describing in a speech in Los Angeles last summer the calamities which have befallen people in the United States, Elijah asked, "Who can be saved?" His answer was "the Muslim believers who faithfully followed and obeyed His Messenger.... The wisest and surest way to success is to unite behind me. I assure you that, with the help of Allah, you will accomplish your goals: money, good homes, and friendships in all walks of life."

Negroes living in slum conditions, hopeless and frustrated, feel Elijah may be an answer to their many problems. These are the Negroes, the less-educated and least-privileged, to whom Elijah directs his appeals. For these Negroes, the Muslim movement provides a means by which they can both release and control their feelings toward what they regard as a hostile white society. The ritual, the fierce verbal attacks upon whites, and the display of authority give a sense of power and adventure. From within NOI closed meetings, the Black Muslims hurl their imprecations, insults, and vague threats at the

distant white world, as they stand surrounded by other friendly black listeners. And the NOI movement's insistence that Negroes are the original people who "must stay among themselves" gives its followers a sense of security and even tranquility.

However, with the exception of a few educators and businessmen who joined the NOI for purely selfish, economic reasons, the bulk of the Negro population shows little interest in the religious aspects of the NOI. Distinguished Negro leaders on many occasions have soundly denounced the NOI with its distorted version of Islam, which continually attacks all established institutions the Negro normally looks to for leadership. As a noted Negro pastor in Harlem warned, the teaching of the Black Muslims "is going in a way contrary to what we know is best. It solves no problems, but only begets greater antagonism."

While the majority of Negroes in the United States do not rush to join the NOI, many seem to respect it. Among those who do not join, few participate in any criticism of it. The Muslim advocacy of black supremacy arouses the sympathy of many Negroes. They silently applaud the boldness of Elijah and his ministers, who openly condemn white people. This taps sentiments of racial pride which seldom find avenues of expression. The Muslims' repeated appeals for clean living, self-respect, and self-uplift independent of the white community apparently have gained considerable



respect among American Negroes. They approve of the way the Muslims live. Lacking knowledge of the complete teachings of the cult, some Negroes see the economic advantages only. Attracted by constant publicity about the claimed rehabilitation of criminals, and seeing the many photographs of well-dressed ministers and members of the elite guard, Fruit of Islam (FOI), they are impressed with the apparent success the NOI has had in bettering conditions of these members. They feel that anything that could help the Negro must be good.

Those Negroes who read the NOI newspaper, "Muhammad Speaks," see in every issue a list of ten demands--"What the Muslims Want." The first three of these demands--full and complete freedom, equal justice under the law, equality of opportunity--are fundamental principles which make up the American creed and are desired by all segments of our society. But other stated demands of the Muslims include land for a nation of their own, exemption from all taxation, freedom from prisons for all Negroes, and so forth. These are impracticable, but many uneducated Negroes cannot help being receptive to some of these demands.

Also impressed by publicity on the NOI are Negro criminals serving in Federal and State prisons. They are a very receptive group, who see Muslim activity within the prisons as an outlet for protest against their situation.

With the attitude of what-have-I-to-lose, they hope that some benefits might come to them by joining the NOI.

For a multitude of reasons, there are American Negroes who sympathize with the Black Muslims or actually become loyal followers of Elijah Muhammad and his NOI leadership. For those who join, "the Messenger's" word is law, and all who wish to remain in the cult must follow Elijah's strict discipline as imposed by his loyal ministers. But this discipline has not been able to prevent trouble in the cult.

Elijah's former leading spokesman, Minister Malcolm X, Elijah's sons Wallace and Akbar, and his grandson Hassan Sharrieff broke from the cult. From these former leaders, we heard Elijah called "a religious faker" and "a fraud" who promoted "concocted religious teachings." Another NOI minister who left the cult in disgust described the NOI as "organized like an army"--the members just "following along" trying to obey the strict discipline demanded by the higher-ups who are carrying on "one of the biggest rackets in the land."

Who are these higher-ups of the NOI? What type of man leads this strange organization?

#### IV. LEADERSHIP

##### A. National Officials

Absolute ruler over the NOI is the "Messenger of Allah," Elijah Muhammad, the 67-year-old former Elijah Poole from Sandersville, Georgia. He formulates and approves all NOI policy and decisions, has the entire funds of the cult at his disposal, and possesses considerable valuable properties throughout the country.

This small, frail, seemingly meek and humble man, who has only a fourth-grade education, is a master at creating mood, myth, and mystery. Elijah possesses that "something" mentioned in an essay on leaders attributed to General Charles de Gaulle, for "Allah's Messenger" seems to understand that "there can be no prestige without mystery," that, "in the designs, the demeanor and the mental operations of a leader, there must always be a 'something' which others cannot altogether fathom, which puzzles them, stirs them and rivets their attention."

Never appearing before the public without his black pillbox hat generously encrusted with jewelled stars and crescent, Elijah seems to have a touch of the patient Oriental in his face. He is not a dynamic speaker. In his public lectures, his rather rasping voice drones on in monotony. But he seems to know when to shake his audience into

excitement Suddenly he will electrify them with a tirade against the "white devils," the Government, or nonbelieving "so-called Negroes."

From every speaker's rostrum on which he appears before the public, Elijah practices brinkmanship tactics to the frenzied delight of his audience, some of whom frequently answer his veiled accusations with, "That's right" or "Praise Allah." They "get the message" even as he carefully refrains from specific language which could cause him to be arrested for "incitement" or "advocacy."

Financially and materially, Elijah has done well for himself as the "Messenger of Allah." With his wife, Clara, and at times some of his eight children, Elijah resided for many years in a 19-room, elaborately furnished home in Chicago. Besides this \$75,000 residence, he owns also other properties in Chicago and elsewhere. In Chicago, an apartment building and a group of other buildings owned by Elijah are valued at more than \$200,000.

In 1961, claiming his continued asthmatic attacks made it necessary for him to leave Chicago, Elijah purchased a \$24,000 swimming-pool-equipped residence in Phoenix, Arizona. He had this house completely remodelled and moved there in October, while his wife continued to maintain the home in Chicago. Wanting more pretentious surroundings in Phoenix, Elijah had a new 12-room residence built on adjoining property, into which he moved in



**Elijah Muhammad**  
**"Messenger of Allah"**

January, 1964. This home and its furnishings are valued at approximately \$100,000. He retains the other Phoenix home as his office.

Though the headquarters of the NOI remain in Chicago, Elijah spends most of his time in Phoenix, where he is served by a chauffeur, cook, and several female secretaries. Involvements between Elijah and several of his young, unmarried secretaries have resulted in considerable embarrassing publicity to this leader of a cult that claims to have raised the morals of its members through its strong condemnation of adultery, fornication, lying, stealing, smoking, et cetera.

In July, 1964, in Los Angeles, two of these former secretaries filed paternity suits naming Elijah as the father of their children. One of them claimed Elijah had fathered her three children and the other claimed one child by Elijah. In Chicago, in July, 1962, two other former secretaries caused a much publicized incident, when each of them left her baby on the front lawn of Elijah's residence. Each claimed that Elijah had fathered her child and demanded that he continue support. Since 1957, several other young secretaries have been similarly involved with Elijah and have borne his children. The situation has become so notorious that members of some of Elijah's temples jokingly refer to it as one of the occupational hazards of serving as a secretary to Elijah.

Elijah's wife, Clara, his daughters, and his sons have been aware of Elijah's personal misconduct for several years but because of their complete

economic dependence upon him have had no choice but to ignore his actions. They have been completely engaged in and supported by NOI activities throughout their lives. Most of them have held some leadership position in the cult hierarchy and because of this have fared well economically--Elijah has been generous in supplying all their wants.

Until the defections of Elijah's sons Wallace and Akbar, and his grandson Hassan Sharrieff, the NOI hierarchy had predominantly included most members of Elijah's immediate family. Still holding leadership positions are his sons Herbert and Elijah, Jr , and his son-in-law Raymond Sharrieff.

Herbert, 36 years old, married, and having at least six children, has for years been considered head of public relations for the NOI and, as "Muhammad Speaks" newspaper representative, he has travelled extensively. Since 1962, he has made four trips to Africa, one trip to Cuba and Mexico, and one trip to Jamaica. On each trip, he has attempted to improve the image of his father's cult and gain support of persons abroad for the NOI. Herbert, like his father, has had an affair with an unmarried young woman who bore him a child and with whom he is constantly having trouble concerning support of this child.

Elijah, Jr., 34 years old, married, with one adopted child, is the assistant supreme captain of the FOI and has been employed at the temple bakery and grocery in Chicago for years. Elijah, Jr., failed to register

under the Selective Service Act, was arrested by the FBI, and later registered as a conscientious objector; however, his local draft board advised he was not acceptable for military service as he was a "marginal literate." There are reports that he heads a young "strong-arm group" of the FOI in the Chicago Temple, which has on several occasions assaulted and beaten NOI members who were being disciplined.

Elijah's daughter Ethel Sharrieff, 41 years old, married to Raymond Sharrieff, had three children by her first husband and two by Raymond. She is diabetic and highly emotional. For several years, she had acted as supreme captain of the Muslim Girls Training (MGT); but, according to her son Hassan, she was temporarily suspended by Elijah because she broke cult rules by continuing to contact Hassan after his defection.

Elijah's other daughter, Lottie Fagan, 38 years old, and his other two sons, Emanuel, 44 years old, and Nathaniel, 40 years old, are still considered Muslims though they are not at present in leadership positions.

Raymond Sharrieff, 46 years old, married to his second wife, Elijah's daughter Ethel, is the supreme captain of the FOI. Raymond has been a Muslim for many years, and he served about two and a half years in a Federal prison for violation of the Selective Service Act. He is a disciplinarian of the NOI. Elijah depends more and more upon Raymond, who acts also as a trustee for the NOI.



The only nonfamily member among Elijah's national leaders is John Simmons, known in the NOI as John Ali. He has been national secretary of the NOI since May, 1960, and his duties consist mainly of fund gathering and handling the NOI's financial dealings. He is 37 years old and is divorced. He has served in the United States Army, was employed as a part-time teacher, worked as an accountant, and has been an NOI member since 1954. Elijah's son and grandson, when they left the cult, advised that John Ali is an opportunist who is in the cult only for the financial opportunities and status he can maintain through cooperation with Elijah. Both claimed that he is completely untrustworthy, has misappropriated cult funds, and is "loose morally."

#### **B. Dissidents**

Though troubles have erupted among members of the cult on many occasions in the past, none had publicly involved the solidarity of the national hierarchy. Many people have wondered what caused the rash of defections and expulsions of former leaders of the cult during the past year. It would be difficult to state for certain, because it must be remembered that the dissident former members and leaders who later loudly condemned Elijah and his present hierarchy for their actions were once among his top supporters and recruiters.

But Elijah does have trouble in his "royal family." The first outward signs of a growing dissidence were revealed after Malcolm X made

**NOI OFFICIALS**



**John Ali  
National Secretary**



**Raymond Sharrieff  
Supreme Captain of FOI**



**Herbert Muhammad  
Head of Public Relations**



**Elijah Muhammad, Jr.  
Asst. Supreme Captain of FOI**

a statement on December 1, 1963, characterizing President John F. Kennedy's assassination as an instance of "the chickens coming home to roost." He had told a cheering NOI audience in New York City that this did not make him sad, it made him glad. Elijah feared the publicity resulting from Malcolm's virulent statements would present to a sorrowing Nation an image of his cult which might lead to trouble for him. A few days later, therefore, he announced that, because of Malcolm's statements, he would not be permitted to make further public speeches. For a month, many furtive conferences were held between Malcolm and members of Elijah's hierarchy. Differences became more pronounced, and in early January, 1964, Elijah removed Malcolm as minister of Temple No. 7, in New York City. Malcolm, on March 8, 1964, publicly announced his complete break with Elijah and the NOI.

On many previous occasions, Malcolm had gloated over disasters to white people without incurring censure from Elijah for his remarks. For example, on the occasion of the crash of an airliner in France killing 120 Georgia tourists, Malcolm spoke of the tragedy as "a beautiful thing that has happened." There are indications that Malcolm's remark made following the President's assassination was not the real cause but rather the excuse for Elijah to expel Malcolm, who may have been acquiring an NOI stature that made Elijah jealous and uncomfortable.

Over the years, the public press had devoted more and more coverage to Malcolm because of his violent denouncements of white people in his many public appearances--in speeches throughout the country, during radio and television interviews, and in statements made to the press. More and more importance was attributed to his position in the cult--many articles reported that Malcolm overshadowed Elijah and was taking over the cult from Elijah, who was ill. This caused much concern to Elijah and members of his family. When Elijah was not able to appear at the annual Muslim convention in Chicago on February 26, 1963, and his place was filled by Malcolm, Elijah's family felt Malcolm was too "bossy" and was "grabbing" too much publicity for himself. Resentment and hostility toward Malcolm rapidly increased among various members of Elijah's family.

About this time, Elijah's son Wallace, who had for a long time been considered "heir apparent" to his father's position, was released from a Federal prison where he had been serving time for his Selective Service violation. Though Wallace was on parole and could not engage publicly in cult activities, it became obvious that his attitude toward his father and other cult leaders had changed considerably from his preprison attitude.

Wallace, 31 years old, married to his second wife, had been educated at the cult's school, the University of Islam No. 2. Long regarded as Elijah's favorite son, Wallace had acted as a cult minister-at-large and

like other ministers had strongly supported all of his father's beliefs. In April, 1960, he was sentenced to three years for failure to report for hospital work as a conscientious objector. During the next three years, his father made unsuccessful court appeals to keep Wallace out of prison. Elijah claims to have spent about \$20,000 in these court battles. On November 1, 1961, just three days before entering prison, Wallace married his second wife.

According to Wallace, even before he entered prison he had experienced doubts about some of his father's teachings which he had felt were in opposition to orthodox Muslim teachings. Then, while serving his prison term, he had time to reflect on a statement made by the judge who had sentenced him concerning how he had been "dominated by his father." He claimed he also wondered about his father's connection with Fard, who his father claimed was Allah but who, in Fard's writings which Wallace had seen, had called himself the "Messenger of Allah."

Upon leaving prison in January, 1963, Wallace said he attempted to clarify some of his doubts about his father and his teachings. He talked to other members of his family concerning his father's behavior but, he said, because of their complete financial dependence on their father, they did nothing.

Though Wallace regularly attended NOI and FOI meetings in Chicago, even teaching some classes at the University of Islam, he apparently stirred up much controversy concerning his father's activities, both nationally and

in the Chicago Temple. By January, 1964, word had reached Elijah that Wallace and Malcolm had talked together and with others concerning Elijah's relationship with his various secretaries and the misuse of cult funds by Elijah and his hierarchy. For some time though, Elijah took no action against his son.

Apparently, Elijah's grandson Hassan Sharrieff was one of the cult members who were influenced by the swelling undercurrent in Chicago. Hassan, during 1963 and until at least May, 1964, when he allied himself with Wallace, had regularly attended NOI meetings, acted as a lieutenant of the FOI in Muslim Mosque (MM) No. 2, and was manager of the MM No. 2 clothing store.

In June, 1964, Hassan left no doubt concerning his feelings about his grandfather and the NOI. He went to the Chicago Police on June 23 requesting protection for himself and his Uncle Wallace. He advised that, at a meeting of the NOI in Chicago on June 21, both had been denounced as "hypocrites" and expelled from the cult for deviating from the teachings of Elijah. Because of this, he felt certain they would be attacked, as Hassan knew that other members had been disciplined by beatings delivered by the Chicago Temple's goon squad.

Big headlines in the Negro newspaper, "Chicago Defender," on July 8, 1964, announced the charges of corruption in the NOI brought by both Wallace and Hassan. Hassan called his grandfather "a fake and a fraud."

He also said, "I am not referring to any single individual's wrongdoings or corruption; I am referring to Mr. Muhammad and his whole staff." Wallace agreed to the accusations against the Muslim hierarchy, telling the paper, "Not only are they true, they are mild."

Another son of Elijah, 25-year-old Akbar, was publicly denounced as a "hypocrite" in the January 1, 1965, issue of "Muhammad Speaks." Better educated than other members of the family, Akbar graduated from a business school in Chicago in 1958 and, since the Fall of 1961, has been attending a university in Cairo, Egypt. Akbar's expulsion from the cult followed a visit he and his Egyptian second wife and child made to this country during November, 1964. Elijah had expected Akbar, while here, to denounce publicly Wallace, Malcolm X, and other "hypocrites." Instead, Akbar told a New York newspaper that while he was in Cairo his eyes had been opened. He said his father's "brand" of religion was "a homemade one with its own tight rules and regulations that tend to stifle any criticism of its leader." Akbar and his family shortly returned to Egypt.

Elijah indeed has had trouble in his "royal family"!

Further confusing the image of Elijah Muhammad and the NOI were events which came to a climax during the last week of February, 1965. Following Malcolm's open break with the NOI in March, 1964, he was outspoken in his

opposition to Elijah. He formed two organizations, the Muslim Mosque, Incorporated, and the Organization of Afro-American Unity, which he claimed would better serve the Negro nationalists. Some NOI members left with Malcolm and became members of these new groups. During several extended periods in 1964, Malcolm travelled in many of the African countries. He returned, amid much publicity, to the United States late in 1964 and impressed many with his new image. He appeared to have softened his violent statements although he still openly condemned Elijah and his cult.

Early in 1965, Malcolm began a series of rallies in New York City. On February 21, 1965, just as Malcolm began to speak to a gathering of about 400 Negroes, a disturbance started and several men ran toward the front of the meeting hall firing guns at Malcolm. He was slain instantly. Arrested, and identified by at least one witness as Malcolm's assassins were several Negroes who in the past had attended NOI functions.

This eventful last week of February, 1965, ended with Elijah's dissident son Wallace making an appearance at the annual NOI convention at Chicago to ask forgiveness for things he had said about his father and the NOI. Though, since his expulsion from the cult in June, 1964, Wallace had headed a dissident group called the Afro-Descendant Upliftment Society, or the Uplift Society, surprisingly Wallace was reaccepted into the NOI on the recommendation of his father.



The first week of March brought another surprising development. As reported in the Chicago press on March 6, Hassan Sharrieff decided to "return to the fold." At a meeting with his grandfather, Hassan's plea for reinstatement was accepted.

What the future holds for Elijah Muhammad and his organization cannot be predicted. Among the dissidents, Malcolm's following apparently is being taken over by his half sister, Mrs. Ella Collins; and, while the Uplift Society is now dormant, those who had followed Wallace cannot be pleased by his decisions. The many accusations against Elijah by Malcolm, Wallace, and Hassan will not quickly be forgotten. Feelings between present and former NOI members continue to be strained.

## **V. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

### **A. National Headquarters**

Since 1934, when Elijah was forced to move from Detroit, the national headquarters of the cult have been at Temple No. 2, in Chicago. Muhammad's Temple No. 2 of the Holy Temples of Islam or, as it is sometimes called, Muhammad's Mosque No. 2, is located at 5335 South Greenwood Avenue, and adjacent to it is the University of Islam No. 2, at 5333 South Greenwood. In the basements of these buildings are the offices of the cult's National Secretary John Ali, Supreme Captain of the FOI Raymond Sharrieff and his assistant, Elijah, Jr., and their secretaries. Two secretaries who handle incoming mail, filing, et cetera, are employed at Elijah's long-time residence at 4847 South Woodlawn. Headquarters for the cult newspaper, "Muhammad Speaks," are at 634 East 79th Street.

### **B. National Membership**

Though the NOI has never published membership figures, estimates reported by the public news media have ranged from a low of 25,000 to a high of 250,000, with the number frequently put at 70,000. All of these figures are grossly exaggerated.

After his defection, Elijah's grandson Hassan estimated the total membership of the cult as 7,000; and this figure approximates the estimate

made by the dissident, former NOI member from Boston, Aubrey Barnette, in his article that appeared in "The Saturday Evening Post," on February 27, 1965. According to the latest FBI information, these membership estimates are about 2,000 too high.

Concerning the NOI's membership, Hassan said no one in the NOI hierarchy had any positive idea of the actual number of members. As has been known by the FBI for years, the membership at any given time could only be estimated, as there is a constant influx of new persons, which is balanced by an egression of old members. New people begin attending meetings on a fairly regular basis. They have their names entered in the "Book of Life," maintained in Chicago, and obtain their "X" names. But as new members enter into the cult's activities, many others at any given time are in various stages of disillusionment--they fail to attend meetings regularly, fail to make the required contributions, do not accept the temple leaders' discipline, and are soon completely out of all the cult's activities.

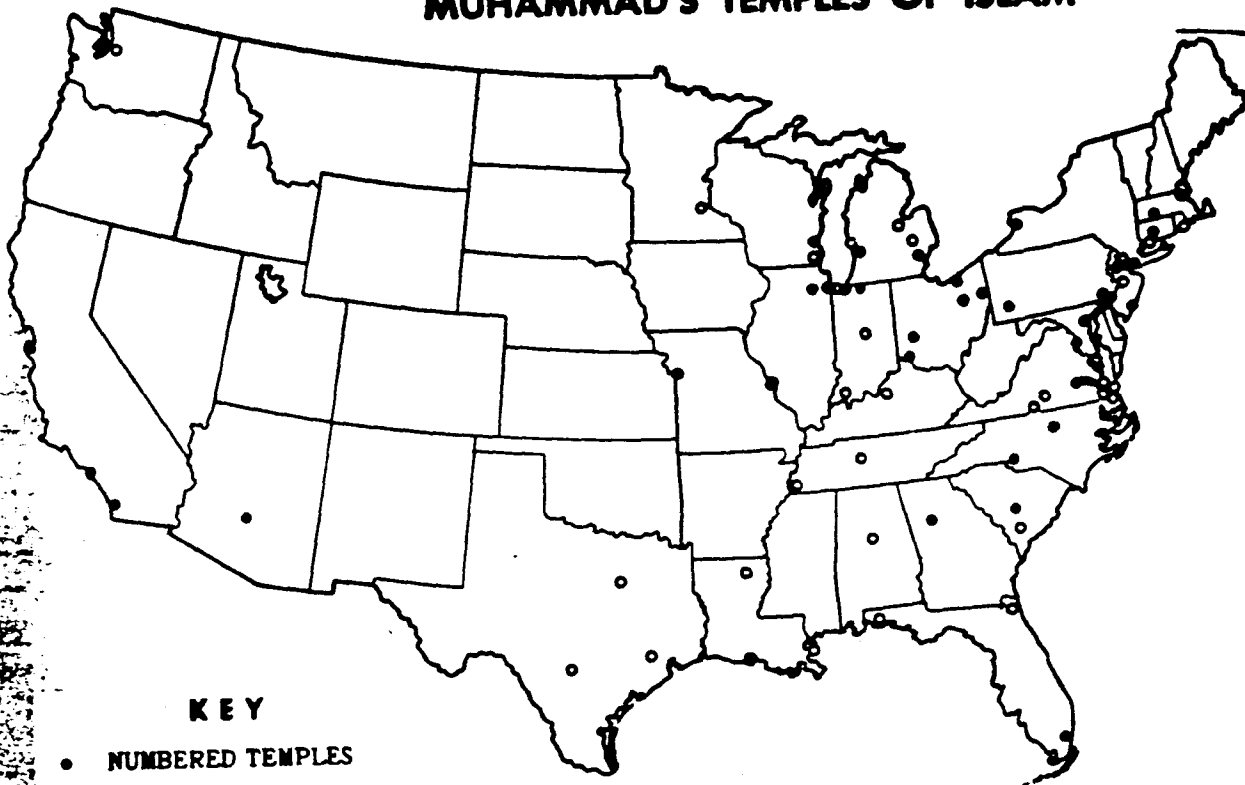
Hassan has said that approximately 100 new persons a month join the Chicago Temple but that "members leave as fast as new ones join" and, therefore, for a number of years the total membership in Chicago has remained almost the same. Several years ago one of Elijah's sons, speaking at a meeting of the Chicago Temple, complained that during the 1961 annual Muslim convention 500 persons "signed up" for membership but only five of them remained in the temple.

### **C. Temples or Mosques**

Individual temples, or mosques, are located in various cities throughout the United States, but all are under the complete discipline of the national headquarters at Chicago. Elijah has designated altogether 38 numbered temples, one of which has been inactive for several years. The 37 active numbered temples are attended by about 4,300 of the total of slightly over 5,000 members of the cult. Only six of these temples have a membership of over 300 members each. These six temples are located in Chicago; Detroit; New York City; Washington, D. C.; Philadelphia; and Los Angeles. Almost half of the NOI's total membership belong to these six temples. Six other temples have memberships of between 100 and 300, and all the rest (25 numbered temples) have less than 100 members each--several having less than 20 members each.

About 750 NOI members attend the meetings of 31 unnumbered NOI groups in various cities in the country. Many of these groups are led by visiting ministers from nearby temples, who frequently are accompanied by members from their own temples in an attempt to stimulate interest in these neighboring cities. Meetings usually are held in small, rented rooms or in homes of the participants. Estimates of normal attendance at meetings

# MUHAMMAD'S TEMPLES OF ISLAM



## KEY

- NUMBERED TEMPLES
- UNNUMBERED GROUPS

## NUMBERED TEMPLES

- 1 DETROIT, MICH.
- 2 CHICAGO, ILL.
- 3 MILWAUKEE, WIS.
- 4 WASHINGTON, D. C.
- 5 CINCINNATI, OHIO
- 6 BALTIMORE, MD.
- 7 NEW YORK, N. Y.
- 8 SAN DIEGO, CALIF.
- 9 YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO
- 10 ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.
- 11 BOSTON, MASS.
- 12 PHILADELPHIA, PA.
- 13 SPRINGFIELD, MASS.
- 14 HARTFORD, CONN.
- 15 ATLANTA, GA.
- 16 GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.
- 17 JOLIET, ILL.
- 18 CLEVELAND, OHIO
- 19 DAYTON, OHIO
- 20 CAMDEN, N. J.
- 21 JERSEY CITY, N. J.
- 22 PITTSBURGH, PA.
- 23 BUFFALO, N. Y.
- 24 RICHMOND, VA.

- 25 NEWARK, N. J.
- 26 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.
- 27 LOS ANGELES, CALIF.
- 28 SAINT LOUIS, MO.
- 29 MIAMI, FLA.
- 30 KANSAS CITY, MO.
- 31 SOUTH BEND, IND.
- 32 PHOENIX, ARIZ.
- 33 GARY, IND.
- 34 DURHAM, N. C.
- 35 WILMINGTON, DEL.
- 36 CHARLOTTE, N. C.
- 37 AKRON, OHIO
- 38 COLUMBIA, S. C.

## UNNUMBERED GROUPS

- BIRMINGHAM, ALA.  
 BRIDGEPORT, CONN.  
 JACKSONVILLE, FLA.  
 PENSACOLA, FLA.  
 EAST CHICAGO, IND.  
 EVANSVILLE, IND.  
 INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

- LOUISVILLE, KY.  
 NEW ORLEANS, LA.  
 MONROE, LA.  
 FLINT, MICH.  
 MUSKEGON, MICH.  
 SAGINAW, MICH.  
 MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.  
 PATERSON, N. J.  
 TRENTON, N. J.  
 PROVIDENCE, R. I.  
 ORANGEBURG, S. C.  
 MEMPHIS, TENN.  
 NASHVILLE, TENN.  
 DALLAS, TEXAS  
 HOUSTON, TEXAS  
 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS  
 LYNCHBURG, VA.  
 MARTINSVILLE, VA.  
 NEWPORT NEWS, VA.  
 NORFOLK, VA.  
 NORFOLK-BERKLEY, VA.  
 PORTSMOUTH, VA.  
 SEATTLE, WASH.  
 RACINE, WIS.

of these unnumbered groups show that only four groups have over 50 persons regularly attending. All of the 27 other groups have less than 35 members each, with many having less than 10.

Most temples are located in the heart of the lower economic or deteriorating Negro neighborhoods. Except for the larger temples, very few are owned by the NOI and most are rented halls which are frequently on the second floor over a store or some other commercial establishment. The notable exceptions are in Chicago, the national headquarters, and in Washington, D. C., where the only NOI-built temple is located.

It is interesting to note that half of the total Negro population of the United States (as of the 1960 census) reside in the 11 Southern States which made up the Confederate States of the Civil War period. Yet, in this area, the NOI has only six temples and 17 small, unnumbered groups having a membership of only about 600 out of the total cult membership of approximately 5,000. Obviously, the NOI has made no great impression on the Southern Negro.

#### **D. Temple Officers**

The highest authority in an individual temple is the minister. He is appointed by Elijah and remains in authority only as long as Elijah believes he is helping the cause. The minister constantly echoes the teachings of Elijah and exhorts his group of Elijah's followers to contribute to the many collections taken for the support of the local temple and its officers and the national organization.

In the larger, established temples, the minister devotes his full time to NOI activity and receives his entire support from donations made by the members of his temple. Usually, his home or rented residence, his auto, and all personal necessities for himself and his family are paid for by the various funds collected at his temple. Those ministers in smaller temples with few regular members frequently must obtain some outside employment to supplement the assistance they receive from the temple. Nearly all ministers do considerable travelling. They make guest appearances at other temples to conduct meetings, or they lead delegations from their temples to attend social affairs and rallies at other temples.

The most articulate and widely known minister, until his expulsion last year, was Malcolm X Little, of MM No. 7, in New York City. As chief spokesman and travelling representative of Elijah Muhammad and the NOI for nearly ten years, he had made numerous public appearances in lectures and debates before college forums, on radio and television, and through interviews given to the public press. A tall, well-dressed, 38-year-old former convict, he freely admitted having been a dope addict, numbers runner, and burglar before becoming "rehabilitated" by Elijah Muhammad. Since his entrance on the NOI scene in early 1966, his dynamic, magnetic personality had been instrumental in the recruitment of many of the present ministers.

In examining the background, education, and personalities of the nine most publicized and active ministers (including those from the six leading temples), one notes a distinct difference in the type of minister active prior to Malcolm's rise to prominence and the type which joined the cult after 1953 and rose to power, influenced and assisted by Malcolm.

Four of the nine ministers had been members of the NOI prior to 1953. Three of these became Muslims in the early 1940's, and each served a prison term for refusal to register for the Army draft. Each had been a Muslim for years before attaining the status of minister. The fourth of these ministers was Malcolm's brother Wilfred, who, though a member of the NOI prior to 1953, had not yet risen to a leadership position. He had earlier been rejected for military service because of low mentality. Only one of these four ministers, whose average age is 43, completed high school.

The remaining five of the nine leading ministers joined the NOI after Malcolm had become a leading official in the cult. All five had been either influenced by Malcolm to join the cult or had received his assistance in their rather rapid rise to leadership positions. All had a high school or college education, one being a Ph. D. and former college professor. These younger men, whose average age is 34, are eager, ambitious, and definitely opportunistic. Two of these five men were former entertainers, one a comic and one the leader of a group of calypso singers. The former college professor had



been first a member of the Socialist Workers Party, and then a prominent member of a group of dissidents who broke off to form the Workers World Party. Finally, after contacts with Malcolm, he allied himself with the Muslims.

As might be expected, the many Muslim ministers, with varied backgrounds, education, and experience, and with very little control over them from national headquarters, use a variety of techniques in maintaining the interest of their members and in their appeals for new Muslims. It could be said the ministers' style of preaching is a blend of the revival preacher and the ward-healing politician. They deliver their messages sometimes in a calm voice with unctuous earnestness and sometimes with rash and inciting statements startling their listeners. Anything goes, as long as it holds the interest of the present followers of Elijah, gains new converts to the cult, and keeps the donations coming into the temples' many funds.

Below the minister, the next highest authority in an individual temple is the captain of the FOI, the group within the NOI composed of the adult male members. Though answerable to the minister, the captain is responsible for discipline in the temple and is the leader of the temple's FOI. In the larger temples, the captain frequently receives financial support and is furnished an automobile from the donations of the members. The captains are usually aggressive, domineering men who relish the opportunity to command the members. They maintain strict military-type discipline over the temple members.

**THE MOST ACTIVE NOI MINISTERS**



**Jeremiah X (Pugh)**  
Philadelphia



**Louis X (Walcott)**  
Boston



**John Shabazz (Morris)**  
Los Angeles



**Bernard X (Cushmere)**  
San Francisco



**Lonnie 3X (Cross)**  
Washington, D. C.



**Isaiah Karriem (Edwards)**  
Baltimore



**James 3X (McGregor)**  
Newark, Jersey City,  
New York



**James 3X (Anderson)**  
Chicago



**Wilfred X (Little)**  
Detroit

The minister and captain are the important officials in each temple, but frequently there are conflicts of authority between them. This became of sufficient concern to the national hierarchy that during 1962 Elijah ordered that Supreme Captain of the FOI Raymond Sharrieff maintain closer control over the FOI captains. Previously, the minister could appoint or remove his captain without consulting national headquarters.

Trouble between the temple officers leads to the development of factions in the temple. Some members support one and some the other leader to obtain favored treatment. Those members suffering most usually just drop out of the temple, but occasionally they form a dissident group and complain to the national officers. As a result, a national officer usually comes to the temple, questions the members, and decides what action is to be taken. Sometimes the dissident members are expelled or, when the official believes the continuance of the temple is endangered, one or the other offending temple officer is transferred to another city.

Other, lesser officials in the individual temples are appointed by the minister according to his need for assistance in conducting the activities of the temple. The female NOI members are headed by one of their number who is called captain of the MGT. Both the FOI captain and the MGT captain have as many lieutenants assisting them as are needed, according to the size of the membership. Here again, there is no standardization in number of officers

in the various temples. Favoritism displayed by the minister leads to ridiculous situations at times. Normally, each captain is assisted by two or three lieutenants, but one temple minister set up his own elite group of twelve particular friends within the temple and made all of them lieutenants. Other members derisively called them the "palace guard."

Larger temples generally have investigators, instructors, inspectors, secretaries, et cetera, each with his own assistants. Some temples also have assistant ministers, who are generally ambitious young men occasionally allowed to lead portions of the temple meetings, and field ministers, who travel to nearby areas to meet with small groups of people in an attempt to bring in new converts.

#### E. Fruit of Islam (FOI)

The Fruit of Islam (FOI) is the special elite group within the NOI, composed of the male members. Under the leadership of Supreme Captain Raymond Sharrieff and the individual temple FOI captain, each temple's FOI is organized and governed by a system with general orders similar to the system in a regular military organization. Regularly, the FOI participates in close-order military drills, engages in group physical exercises, and receives judo and karate training. The major objective of this training program is to create healthy minds and bodies among the faithful followers of Elijah. Acting as bodyguards and escorts for temple

# FRUIT OF ISLAM



Elijah Muhammad (1) Arriving at Airport in New York and Guarded by Supreme Captain Sharrieff (2) and FOI Men



Drill Captain



Callisthenics in Temple No. 2

officials, these vigorous young men impart a crisply efficient tone to the meetings of the organization. They impress nonmembers of the Negro communities with the massed and ready power of the Muslim organization and the accomplishments they have achieved through faith in Elijah's teachings. But the FOI has other functions.

Besides the protection of officers and property of the cult, the FOI enforces compliance with the many cult rules imposed on all members. Probably most important of these many rules is that every Muslim must sell the NOI newspaper, "Muhammad Speaks." The FOI sees to it that the members fulfill their obligation to sell the paper. To discipline those members breaking the rules, as well as nonmembers who cause trouble for the cult, goon squads have been organized in some of the temples. These small groups of selected men, frequently led by former professional boxers, well-trained in karate and judo, have been employed to threaten or, on occasions, to brutally assault other Negroes. Charts have been used to show vulnerable spots on the human body, and instructors demonstrate the lethal blows that can be used. One instructor advised members of his group to "obtain salt brine" and soak their hands in it to toughen them enough to break planks.

The FOI is deadly serious. In one temple preparing for a visit from Elijah, the captain told the FOI to "be more like soldiers" and not to be smiling.

all the time. He said, "I want you to look like killers. We are not here to play. We will protect the Messenger at all costs."

In most large temples, the FOI is broken down into several groups. One consists of men 18 to 25 years old, about six feet tall, with good physiques, and in excellent health. These men, smooth-shaven and with close-cropped hair, and neatly attired in dark suits, act as honor guard at all public events. Young men 16 to 18 years of age and men over 25 years are generally placed in other groups. Most temples also have a junior FOI composed of boys up to 16 years of age who are trained for eventually joining the senior groups.

F. Muslim Girls Training (MGT)

Similar to the military-type organization of the FOI is the NOI's female counterpart called the Muslim Girls Training (MGT), sometimes referred to by the female members as the General Civilization Class. Led by its captain and as many lieutenants as are necessary, this group engages in the many activities Elijah believes necessary for his female followers. They have classes in homemaking, hygienics, calisthenics, and other subjects, such as Muslim history and the English language. They are constantly urged to be "properly dressed", that means, they must wear long, loose-fitting dresses or white robes, flat shoes, and no lipstick and cover their heads with a white shawl-type headdress. They are expected to purchase their apparel

**MUSLIM GIRLS TRAINING (MGT)**



**"Properly Dressed" Sisters of NOI**



**Elijah's Daughter Ethel Sharrieff  
Instructs the Sisters**



at the cult's Chicago clothing store, at prices usually higher than at other stores. In all its activities, the MGT is under the same strict discipline from its superior officer as is the FOL. And, like the FOL, it has a junior MGT of girls under the age of 16.

#### G. Schools

Two schools are presently being operated for NOI children, the University of Islam No. 1, in Detroit, and the University of Islam No. 2, in Chicago. Actually, neither is a university. The one in Detroit is attended by about 125 students in grades one through nine, and the one in Chicago has about 500 students and includes high school subjects. Few stay to graduate. The University of Islam No. 2 graduated in February, 1964, only four from high school and seventeen from the eighth grade.

Christine X Johnson, director of the Chicago school, said in a recent issue of "Muhammad Speaks" that the purpose of the NOI schools is, besides teaching the regular academic subjects, educating "the children of Muslims in the knowledge of self, through the history of black men from ancient times to the present." She described how the schools turn their boys and girls "into self-respecting, intelligent, well-mannered, disciplined citizens."

While this seems commendable, those inside the movement know the real purpose is to indoctrinate the students with Elijah's teaching while keeping

them ignorant of American history and government and out of contact with the "white devil" children. It is known that NOI schools have many problems of discipline, many students being suspended and others dropping out because of pregnancy.

The Chicago and Detroit schools have operated since the middle 1930's, but over the years they have not been without their problems with education and health officials. During 1963, the Illinois Legislature considered a bill concerning control of certain schools, specifically aimed at control of the Muslim school; but, although it passed the senate, it failed to get through the house.

Other temples, on occasions, have attempted to start schools but to date have been unsuccessful. Several temples do operate one-day-a-week classes for NOI children, and others have some form of an adult education program.

For several years after 1958, there were numerous requests and much publicity regarding donations for a proposed large NOI educational center in Chicago. Though Chicago authorities blocked this building program several years ago, Elijah has recently inaugurated a new program for an educational center in Chicago. He says this center will be "not for Muslims exclusively, but for the whole black nation." He is, therefore,

appealing to all "so-called American Negroes" to contribute to the MDM No. 2 educational fund. Elijah feels this center would assure the "so-called Negroes" of his desire to give them "knowledge of self."

## **VI. RESOURCES**

### **A. Sources of Income**

"The prime source of funds for national obligations come from the Muslims' charity," National Secretary John Ali frequently reminds the members in letters to the NOI temples throughout the country. "Muslims' charity" certainly begins at home, for John Ali, soliciting cult funds, demands that members "should forget their rent, bills, wives and children, as when the Nation needs money you must give." Charity actually implies need, and benevolence and good will to the poor and suffering. But, if "Muslim charity" reaches the poor and needy, Elijah Muhammad must exercise the benevolence, for he controls all the resources of the cult and cannot, himself, be said to be suffering from lack of material things.

Other revenue to support "the Nation" is raised by members at bazaars, rallies, and dinners arranged by the various temples, through sales of the cult newspaper, and from the profits of businesses operated by some of the temples.

It is significant that every activity of the NOI is keyed to the raising of money. Those activities which do not produce the desired profit are abandoned and new activities are then stressed.

## **1. Funds**

Every member of the NOI is required to make regular weekly contributions to numerous special funds collected in each temple. Money collected in four of these funds is sent directly to Chicago for use of the national organization:

No. 2 Poor Treasury Fund--The prime charity of the cult, for the personal use of Elijah to support his family.

Central Point Fund--For the expenses of the national organization and to assist in paying the salaries of various ministers.

National Security Fund--For the defense of Muslims involved in trouble with the law.

Savior's Day Fund--For a gift which is presented to Elijah at the Muslim convention held about February 26 of each year. Each member is requested to give from \$100 to \$125 in honor of the NOI founder, W. D. Fard, whose birth date Elijah claims was February 26, 1877.

Other funds are used for the expenses of the individual temples.

Though the needs of the particular temple determine the number of special funds required, the following have been customary in various temples:

Administration Fund--For salary and expenses of the temple minister.

Rent or Mortgage Fund--For payment of temple rent or mortgage payments.

General Treasury Fund--For general expenses of the temple.

School Fund--For operation of school or special classes at the temple.

Transportation Fund--For operation of autos used by temple officers.

In addition to these regularly used funds, special collections are frequently taken for specific incidental purposes. For example, when Elijah attends an NOI rally put on by a certain temple, the members usually must provide extra funds to cover his expenses. Often, when a temple officer needs a new car or some extra item, the members must make additional contributions.

The contributions demanded from members vary in individual temples from about \$6 to \$13.50 per week. Of course, not all members can meet these demands and this is a frequent cause for ridicule of or disciplinary action against the delinquent member.

NOI rules, which ministers constantly stress to members, include fasting on certain occasions, reduction of regular meals to one a day, and the nonuse of tobacco, liquor, and drugs. Ostensibly, these rules are for improving members' health, but one wonders if there also may be an economic reason behind these regulations made by Elijah. In their constant requests for contributions, ministers remind the members that Muslims who eat only one meal a day save \$730 per year more than Christians who eat three meals a day; that, by following the rules against smoking and the use of liquor, they can save additional hundreds of dollars a year; and that, therefore, it should be no hardship for them to make their weekly duty contributions or their annual Savior's Day gifts.

## **2. Cult Newspaper**

While serving as their main propaganda organ, the cult's weekly newspaper, "Muhammad Speaks," is another money-making enterprise. FOI captains regularly emphasize to members that "the number-one program is selling the newspaper." Though the number to be sold varies in individual temples, each FOI member is required to purchase and resell from 50 to 300 copies of each issue of the paper. Contests are held by the various temples. Teams are made up to cover certain areas of each city and prizes are awarded to top salesmen. A winning team of two young salesmen of one temple sold 1,800 copies of a particular edition. Currently, the paper is running a nationwide contest in which the winner, who "circulates" the most cult papers before June 30, 1965, is promised a new 1965 automobile.

Sales by the NOI's unpaid "newsboys" plus income from advertising net the cult approximately \$30,000 from each weekly edition of "Muhammad Speaks."

## **3. NOI Businesses**

Most of the larger temples of the cult operate restaurants, grocery or meat stores, clothing stores, or service-type enterprises; and, in nearly all other areas where the cult is active, many additional businesses are owned and operated by cult members. Because these businessmen derive most of their income from sales to other cult members, they buy advertising space

in the NOI paper. Then, reaping double benefits, the cult demands sizeable contributions from these business owners.

Elijah constantly preaches that his followers should trade only with other Muslims and stresses the importance he places on Muslims' developing their own business enterprises completely separate from the white society.

Despite Elijah's emphasis on members' operating their own businesses, the cult's many rules restricting its members make the successful operation of a business very difficult. The member who owns a business, just as any other member, is required to attend cult meetings several nights a week and on weekends and is expected to sell his quota of the cult newspaper. For a cult member whose establishment should stay open evenings and weekends, these requirements cause him a loss of income. Additionally, many of the businessman's customers are cult members who frequently buy on credit. This further restricts the businessman's income because, as mentioned earlier, members are advised to pay their cult dues before paying their bills.



#### **4. Public Activities--Bazaars and Rallies**

**Other favorite fund-raising activities of the NOI are rallies and bazaars held by the various temples during the year.**

**Amid much publicity, bazaars are supposed "to focus public attention on the economic potential of the Negro community by displaying the wares, products, and services of Negro businessmen." Some form of musical entertainment is provided, and the Muslim minister and some Negro celebrity usually appear as speakers. Of course, admission is charged, and refreshments and craftwork are sold. Heavyweight boxing champion Cassius Clay, known in the cult as Muhammad Ali, is a great drawing card for the NOI and has appeared at bazaars in New York, Boston, and other cities.**

**Individual temples also hold rallies at which Elijah or some other member of the national hierarchy usually delivers the main speech. Busloads of cult members from nearby temples attend these rallies, and visiting ministers precede the main speaker to "warm up" the crowd with praise of Elijah. Collections are taken from those in attendance, and frequently the host temple arranges a dinner where those in attendance may purchase meals following the rally.**

**The most important public rally of the cult is the annual convention, called the Savior's Day convention of the Muslims. The 1965 convention was a three-day affair held February 26 through 28 in the dingy, 65-year-old**

Chicago Coliseum. As at all Muslim rallies, after passing through the searching procedure, the visitor entering the hall was met by Muslim guards holding out buckets for contributions. Elijah appeared and spoke on only two afternoons, the 26th and the 28th. On Saturday afternoon, the 27th, a Unity Bazaar was held. This is a regular event of each annual convention, but for this bazaar there was featured a special boxing exhibition by Cassius Clay. "Muhammad Speaks" had announced that tickets would be on sale at cult business places for "donations" ranging from \$10 for ringside to \$1.50 for third-balcony seats. Clay's scheduled second exhibition that day was cancelled for an undisclosed reason. Frequently, these Muslim bazaars fall short of the claims set forth for them in advance press notices.

On the last afternoon, the 28th, Elijah spoke before about 3,000 in the hall which could hold 7,500. Because of Malcolm's assassination a few days earlier, violence was expected, and one former Muslim was beaten and forcibly ejected just before Elijah was to speak. The United Press has reported that Elijah's rambling speech lasted over three hours and that "even some of his devoted followers were leaving the Chicago Coliseum as he droned his way through the last hour." Concerning the contents of Elijah's speech, the United Press reported that it "ranged from economics to moon flights, from Islam to short skirts on women, and from the threat of death

to men on Mars. He confided that 'Allah takes pictures of people on Mars. They're tall and skinny, they're about seven to nine feet tall, not intelligent as we are.'" The 1965 convention was no glowing success. Attendance at all functions was considerably less than at previous conventions.

#### **B. Wealth**

As previously mentioned, all NOI funds and property are under the complete control of Elijah Muhammad. Although most real estate is owned in the names of various temples, members of Elijah's family, or the Progressive Land Developers, Incorporated, Elijah, as the "Messenger of Allah" and absolute ruler of the NOI, makes or approves all decisions involving the financial policies and holdings of the entire cult.

In recent years, Elijah apparently obtained professional aid to protect his real-estate holdings. The Progressive Land Developers, Incorporated, was organized in January, 1963, "to own, operate, manage and maintain, subdivide and otherwise develop and promote real-estate business." Officers of this company are FOI Captain Raymond Sharrieff, MM No. 2 Minister James SX Anderson, and John Hassan--Raymond Sharrieff's cousin and an old-time member who has no authority but whose name is frequently utilized in the cult's financial transactions. The title to many of the recent real-estate acquisitions of the cult has been held in this corporation's name.

For many years, the NOI transacted all of its business in cash; but, since late 1961, the national organization and several of the individual temples have utilized banking facilities. Claiming to be a religious body, the national organization opened corporate accounts, both checking and savings, in the name of "Muhammad's Temple No. 2 of the Holy Temples of Islam." During the 26 months prior to August, 1964, nearly \$1,750,000 passed through these accounts.

The Chicago Temple also utilizes individual savings accounts for each of the various funds to which members of MM No. 2 donate money for temple expenses. Many other temples also maintain savings accounts in their home cities for temple funds.

Elijah and his wife, Clara Muhammad, have personal accounts in banks in Chicago and Phoenix. Rumors have circulated that Elijah and his wife have also secretly deposited funds in foreign banking institutions. Foreign deposits could have been made by Elijah's wife and some of his sons who in recent years have made numerous trips outside the country; however, there are so many ways by which funds could be sent out of the country secretly that it would be virtually impossible to prove this allegation.

C. "Muhammad's 3-Year Economic Savings Plan"

Many persons over the past few years have credited the Black Muslims with helping American Negroes to better themselves through the

various NOI programs. One of these programs which the NOI has proudly advertised in its newspaper and by signs on public transportation vehicles is "Muhammad's 3-Year Economic Plan." This so-called self-help savings plan deserves close examination.

Elijah Muhammad began laying the groundwork for his new savings bank program in two articles on economics which appeared in the July 3 and 17, 1964, issues of "Muhammad Speaks." In these articles, Elijah renewed his often - repeated claims that "the white man's time is growing shorter" and that "Christianity has never been able to produce the right leadership for our people--and never will." He again berated the "black man in America" as "a people who do not want to accept their own responsibility," who are "begging and praying to the white man to accept you." Elijah complained that "it is difficult to plan an economic system for a people who are subject to the whim of another people. You are limited in your jobs, salaries and income by the white man. But you can still learn not to be reckless and wasteful spenders."

Elijah advised his readers, "You can save hundreds of millions of dollars--even billions--if you would accept the right economic program and stop using things which destroy your health, such as tobacco, which doctors warn us can cause cancer. X-rays are known also to be dangerous and produce

cancer.... Scientists now warn you against gazing into TV sets for any long length of time, because this can produce cancer in the body."

Elijah warned, "The only salvation for you and me now is in unity and being under the guidance of Allah through his Messenger and His program for us all.... Our problem is to be solved by a divine solution of Allah's Messenger. Follow me and live. Reject me and die as people without the help of God and friend."

The first public announcement of Elijah's "divine solution" appeared in the August 28, 1964, issue of the cult paper. Large headlines proclaimed, "Muhammad Calls for--3-Year Savings Plan for Negro." The article by Elijah contained the following excerpts:

"I appeal to all Muslims, and to all the members of the original Black Nation in America, to sacrifice at least 5 cents from each day's work to create an 'Economic Savings Program' to help fight unemployment, abominable housing, hunger, and nakedness of the 22 million Black People here in America who continue to face these problems."

"Send your 25 cents every week to Muhammad's Mosque No. 2--Chicago, Illinois. This 25 cents will be banked until we have a million dollars to begin building a banking system."

"Let the entire nation sacrifice..."

"As soon as we have enough finance in our bank to purchase farm lands sufficient to feed the 22 million black people, we will build storage warehouses to store our produce for the necessities of life for our people."

"Please respond and help yourself. Each and everyone of you will be sent a receipt which will be recorded in our books for the Muslims' Three-Year Economic Program for the Black Nation in America. You will be receipted for every penny you sent to this office, which you will keep as your record."

"I await your response."

The next issue of "Muhammad Speaks" contained another article by Elijah in which he claimed great progress with the "3-Year Savings Plan."

Following are excerpts from this September 11, 1964, issue:

"This plan has been accepted by both Muslims and non-Muslims.... Let us continue this most essential work: give all we can and stop buying that which we can do without.

"I am asking that we (the whole nation) sacrifice for the next three years, and when we get enough in our bank we will put it to work to make more money...."

"We would like to raise at least \$500,000,000 in the next three years. If all would contribute willingly and honestly all that they could to this economic plan.... we would soon have billions...."

"There are millions of your dollars lying in the white man's banks, doing nothing for anyone...."

"I am appealing to you--each and every one of the 22 million black people of America--to send every penny, nickel, dime, dollar, hundreds of dollars, thousands of dollars, and millions of dollars that you can spare to this 'Three-Year Economic Plan;' MUHAMMAD'S MOSQUE NO. 2--5333 South Greenwood Ave. --Chicago, Illinois 60615."

"... When our mark of one million dollars is accomplished, we are going to build a national reserve bank for the black people of America."

To the casual observer, this program may appear plausible. But using a little arithmetic, we find that before Elijah Muhammad could accomplish his goal of \$1,000,000 to open the national reserve bank, he would need considerable help from non-Muslim Negroes. For, if every one of his known active followers faithfully contributed the 25 cents per week which Elijah has requested, it would take over 15 years, or well into 1980, to collect that amount.

Even more unlikely of accomplishment is his proposal to raise \$500,000,000 in the next three years. To reach this goal, well over 12 million persons would have to contribute 25 cents every week for the next three years.

Could it be that a friend of the NOI applied some arithmetic to Elijah's "divine solution" and pointed out its inconsistencies? At any rate, there appeared



in the September 25, 1964, issue of "Muhammad Speaks" a coupon to be clipped, signed, and mailed to the Chicago headquarters of the "3-Year Economic Plan."

In fine print was the pledge:

"I am going to enclose 50¢ with this coupon, and every coupon hereafter that is printed in this Newspaper..."

Soon issues of the paper contained more than one coupon. The November 20 issue had five. Perhaps it was felt that if "every coupon" was forwarded to Chicago, Elijah's proposed bank could be started earlier than 1980.

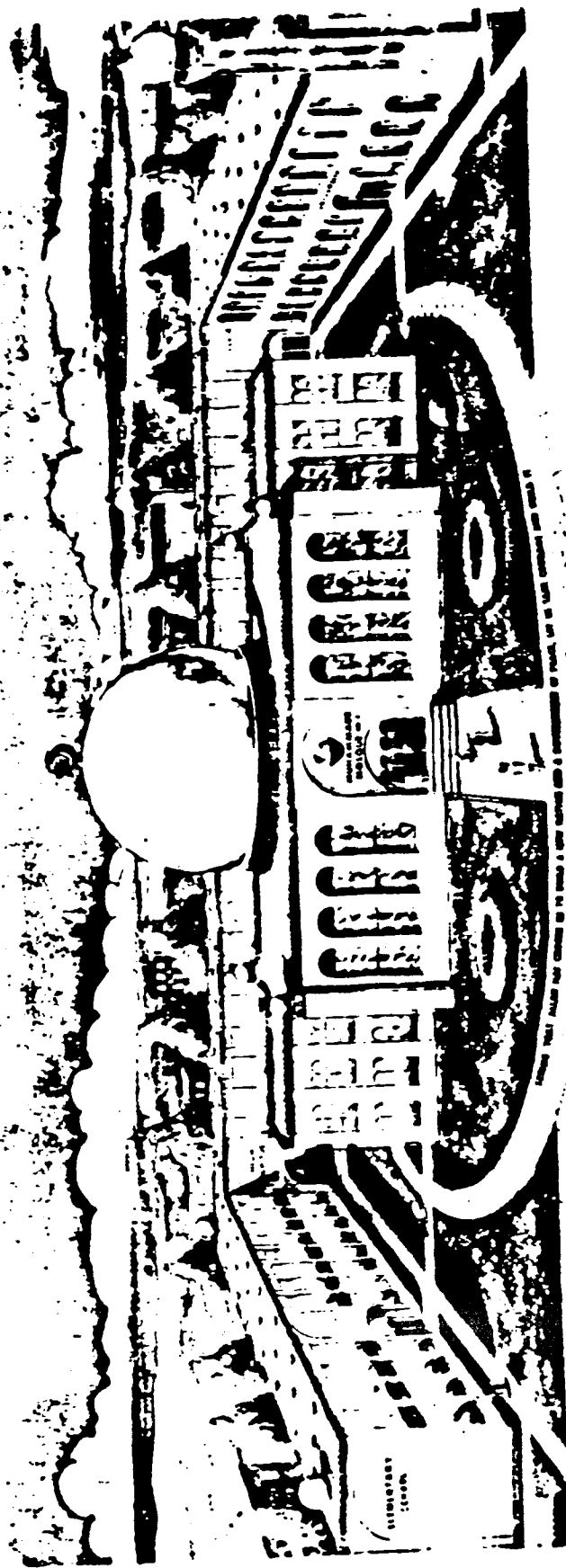
#### D. Educational Center

Elijah Muhammad apparently desires to initiate programs frequently to show his earnestness in aiding the "so-called Negroes" in America. With his "3-Year Economic Plan" under way, he has renewed an earlier plan for an NOI educational center to be built in Chicago.

This earlier proposed center was announced in 1958. In the following two years, Elijah's constant appeal for contributions began with \$3,500,000 and grew to \$20,000,000. Though land was purchased in Chicago, it was condemned later for city use by the Chicago Park District, and the NOI was compensated for its return. Whatever funds were collected in this two-year drive never have been publicly accounted for.

Now, Elijah has revived his drive for a new educational center. In January, 1964, the cult newspaper began the campaign with articles and drawings

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## AN EDUCATIONAL CENTER

*As seen through the eyes of cartoonist Eugene Mallet of Mohammed's Idea*

(ALL ARCHITECT'S DRAWINGS WILL BE PREPARED WITH AVAILABLE MATERIAL AND SCENES)

**THE UNITY OF MILLIONS CAN DO THIS!**

**LET US HELP HIM TO BUILD!**

Proposed Educational Center

regarding the proposed center. The plans are even more extravagant than the earlier ones; however, this time Elijah does not set a figure for the amount he needs before beginning the project. Each issue of the paper requests "all so-called Negroes" to "send your contributions today to: Muhammad's Mosque No. 2 Educational Fund."

## **VII. RECRUITMENT AND MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURES**

### **A. Recruitment**

The most successful recruiter for the Black Muslims over the past few years had been Malcolm X. Due to the rising interest in the Negro rights movement, Malcolm's outspoken attacks on white society, widely publicized in the press, aroused the curiosity of many American Negroes. These people, therefore, were in a receptive mood when approached by Muslim recruiters "fishing" for "lost-found" to "come to Muhammad's temple and hear our minister tell you of our program for the so-called Negro."

All temples require their FOI men to "fish" throughout Negro areas prior to the Sunday, public NOI meetings. Frequently, this is done in areas where Negro Christian churches hold their services. FOI men, while hawking the cult newspaper, also urge Negroes to visit open temple meetings. But strict rules forbid these recruiters, or any rank-and-file Muslim, to engage in discussion of NOI teachings with non-Muslims. Only NOI ministers and national officers trained to promote Elijah's version of Islam are permitted to teach the "lost-found."

During the Spring of 1964, the FOI captain of one of the leading NOI temples discussed "fishing" procedures which he said Elijah wanted followed. He said Elijah was interested in the "trashy" or indigent-type Negro rather

than the "elite" or "snooty" ones. According to this captain, Elijah was interested in dope addicts, prostitutes, thieves, gamblers, and drunkards. His technique apparently is to offer to society's black rejects the organizational apparatus of the NOI. Believing these social outcasts will be shunned by other Negro leaders, Elijah hopes to impress upon them that he is interested in their rehabilitation. After considerable experience, Elijah knows the unintelligent Negro is more apt to follow cult teachings.

To date, Elijah has had little success in recruiting educated Negroes, whom he calls "white folks loving" Negroes. He expressed his feelings toward them at an NOI rally in Detroit in May, 1964. He said, "College people think their education will save them. Negroes are ignorant even though they attended college because they do not have a knowledge of themselves. They will be destroyed because of their ignorance and stubbornness."

Cult ministers and other leaders recognize that the constant turnover in membership requires constant recruiting efforts. One extreme measure used in Chicago over the past few years has been the cult's effort to interest various Negro youth street gangs in NOI membership. NOI recruiters, taking advantage of a gang member's penchant for militancy, approach a youth and remind him that the NOI basically is fighting for the same objective as the gang, that is, Negro supremacy; and, whereas the

gang is small, the NOI is great and would welcome these youths. As additional enticement, recruiters promise the gang member he will receive judo and karate training as a member of the cult. Chicago Welfare authorities, who have closely followed this recruitment activity, report the Muslims have had no apparent success. Gang members, when introduced to the religious aspects of the cult and the discipline demanded of members, after only a few meetings lose interest in the NOI.

The cult newspaper, "Muhammad Speaks," and Elijah's exploitation of famous Negro athletes are other approaches to recruitment which will be discussed later in this monograph.

#### B. Membership Procedures

The "lost-found" Negro who has been "steered" into the temple by NOI recruiters is met there by a well-dressed, polite FOI guard who takes the visitor's name. The guard explains to the visitor that before entering the meeting room he must be searched. Following a frisking, the visitor is seated near the front of the hall, facing the minister. Much of the minister's message is directed to him and his fellow visitors. Guests are always pressed to return to the next meeting.

After the initial visit by a "lost-found," the follow-up methods of the various temples may be slightly different. However, all temples continually urge nonmembers to "unite with your own kind." Those who express a desire

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to learn more of the NOI are considered "registrants." They receive a certain amount of instruction and are furnished a letter which they must copy in their own handwriting and send to Elijah Muhammad's Chicago address. This letter is the sender's application for membership and closes with the statement: "I desire to reclaim my own. Please give me my original name. My slave name is..."

Usually, the registrant must wait several weeks before receiving an answer from Chicago. If he made no error on his application, he is notified he has been accepted for membership and his name entered in the "Book of Life."

It is explained to the registrant that the "so-called Negro," during the centuries he was in slavery, lost his original name and was given his master's surname. When the registrant becomes an NOI member, his "slave" name is dropped and he is given an X (meaning unknown) until his "true" name is given back to him. When entered in the "Book of Life," the first James was James X; the second, James 2X; and so forth. Members with a common given name are now being given "X" names in high numbers, such as James 78X, John 57X, and Charles 37X.

But how he receives his "true" name, if ever, is somewhat of a mystery to even the NOI member. Hassan Sharrieff, in his letter of resignation from the NOI, denounced his grandfather Elijah and complained

about his flagrant injustice with regard to assigning "true," or original, names to his followers. Elijah never did favor certain old faithfuls with any but an "X" name, Hassan said and added his observation that these slighted Muslims were those who achieved no material gain or fame in Elijah's eyes. Although Hassan recalled that Elijah had said he could not give out these names, that it was up to Allah, he noted that Elijah's favorites, such as his personal secretaries, National Secretary John Simmons (John Ali), and Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali), the heavyweight boxing champion, received their "true" names quite early. Clay learned of his while he was listening to a radio broadcast. He commented, "I am honored. "



## VIII. PUBLICITY

Elijah Muhammad fully understands that wide publicity is extremely necessary for the continuation of the NOI. Though he and his ministers appear before the public frequently to promote NOI teachings--on radio and television, at rallies and feasts, and at the annual conventions--Elijah has long felt the written word could reach "so-called Negroes" who would not attend public functions. Also, he has not overlooked the fact that this method of spreading his "message of Truth" brings in considerable revenue.

### A. Publications

Beginning in early 1956, Elijah arranged for a column, under his by-line, entitled "Mr. Muhammad Speaks" to appear regularly in the weekly Negro newspaper, the Pittsburgh "Courier." Immediately, selling papers became one of the most important of the cult's programs. In temples throughout the country, NOI members were given quotas for the number of these papers they were required to buy and resell. By the Summer of 1959, however, Elijah's attempts to dictate the paper's policy caused a conflict with the publisher, and his column was dropped. The NOI then switched its hawking activity to another Negro weekly, the Los Angeles "Herald-Dispatch," which also had been printing Elijah's column and other NOI news.

By the Fall of 1961, Elijah and some of his hierarchy decided they had "made money for several other papers, now we will make some for ourselves." In October, 1961, they hired the "Chicago Defender" to print the first issue of their new paper, "Muhammad Speaks." Soon after, the Muslims bought themselves a rotary press and issued their own paper once a month until July, 1962, when they changed it to a bimonthly. Since February 12, 1965, "Muhammad Speaks" has been issued weekly. The paper first sold at 10 cents per copy, but the price was raised to 15 cents in January, 1962, and to 20 cents in April, 1963.

Over the years, other Negro newspapers have intermittently printed articles on the cult, as well as columns written by Elijah and other cult members. But Elijah's dictatorial attitude and demands have caused considerable trouble. The editors of the Los Angeles "Herald-Dispatch" became disenchanted with Elijah and dropped his column in May, 1963. Only the "New Crusader," a struggling Negro weekly published in Chicago, has been fairly consistent in running Elijah's column. Prior to its NOI association, this small paper, edited by a former waiter, was published under another name and supported leftist doctrines.

"Muhammad Speaks" is a tabloid newspaper published by Muhammad's Mosque No. 2, at 634 East 79th Street, Chicago. Generally 24 to 28 pages in length, this paper is superior to the average Negro paper in layout and

technical quality. Large headlines in unusual combinations of black and white lettering on a shaded background streak across the pages. Since mid-1964, more and more pictures have been printed in color.

On the front page of every issue, an article by Elijah Muhammad, usually accompanied by his photograph, dramatically sets forth some phase of his teachings. Very often, also appearing on the front page is either a large picture or a drawing which emphasizes racial strife, police brutality, or some form of violence against the black man. Throughout the paper, nearly everything printed tends to aggravate the soreness of race relations in the United States and around the world. Always, the white man is portrayed as the brutal oppressor and the black man as the innocent victim. One- or two-paragraph news articles and filler-type inserts printed throughout the paper follow this same line. Some of the articles are dated, but many are not. The time element is not important. One recent issue contained six filler inserts, all of which referred to Negro slave revolts in the United States during the 19th century.

To emphasize the progress of the black man through following Elijah's teachings, many articles describe the achievements of members who operate their own businesses. Each issue of the paper also contains a section called "What Islam Has Done For Me." Therein, various NOI members relate the circumstances which led them into the cult. In all



Typical Front Pages of Cult Newspaper

cases, they tell how they were unhappy, destitute, and without hope but how, after becoming followers of the "Messenger of Allah," they are happy, their economic status has improved, and they have a purpose in life.

Many photographs and pictorial sketches are included throughout each issue of the paper. A typical issue contained five pictures showing Negroes being beaten by white police, two cartoons depicting the Negro being threatened by whites, a large photograph of a sobbing Negro mother whose son had been slain in a riot, and one of a Negro male victim of a beating by white youths.

Interspersed with these pictures of white violence are many news pictures of Elijah, Negro leaders of emerging African countries, smiling and happy NOI members, and prominent Negroes--both Muslim and non-Muslim. The back page of each issue has a photograph of Elijah, and the rest of the page is devoted to "The Muslim Program." This consists of the list of 10 items entitled "What the Muslims Want" and a list of 12 items entitled "What the Muslims Believe."

Considerable advertising appears in each issue of "Muhammad Speaks." The paper regularly carries classified advertisements placed by businesses operated by the various NOI temples and by individual NOI members. In addition to coupons soliciting future classified advertising, many other coupons are printed. Readers are thus enticed to clip and mail these coupons, indicating thereon that they wish to contribute to the "3-Year Economic Plan,"

or desire to subscribe to "Muhammad Speaks," or perhaps want to purchase books and other products for sale by NOI shopkeepers.

Regular features of the paper are columns by Tynnetta Deanar, Harriett Muhammad, and Abdul Basit Naeem. Who are these featured columnists?

Tynnetta Deanar, in late 1959, was a young, light-skinned, unmarried Negro girl who became a secretary to Elijah Muhammad and soon began writing a column entitled "Women in Islam." In her column, Tynnetta forcefully echoes Elijah's teaching that the Negro woman should completely disassociate herself from the customs and practices of the white woman, that the white race is "the real enemy of our people," and that the black people must develop strong "racial pride and solidarity."

What Tynnetta advocates, however, is not what Tynnetta practices. Since serving as a secretary to Elijah, she has taken two vacations, once travelling to Cincinnati in 1960, where she gave birth to a baby girl, and again to Albuquerque in 1964, where she gave birth to a baby boy. This young Negro columnist, who so strongly advocates pride of race, listed on the girl's birth certificate that the baby was white, that she herself was white, and that the alleged father was white.

The Messenger of Allah Presents

# The Muslim Program

## What the Muslims Want

This is the question asked most frequently by both the whites and the blacks. The answers to this question I shall state as simply as possible.

1. We want freedom. We want a full and complete freedom.

2. We want justice. Equal justice under the law. We want justice applied equally to all, regardless of creed or class or color.

3. We want equality of opportunity. We want equal membership in society with the best in civilized society.

4. We want our people in America whose parents or grandparents were descendants from slaves, to be allowed to establish a separate state or territory of their own—either on this continent or elsewhere. We believe that our former slave masters are obligated to provide such land and that the area must be fertile and mineral rich. We believe that our former slave masters are obligated to maintain and supply our needs in this separate territory for the next 20 to 25 years—until we are able to produce and supply our own needs.

Since we cannot get along with them in peace and equality after giving them 400 years of our sweat and blood and receiving in return some of the worst treatment human beings have ever experienced, we believe our contributions to this land and the suffering forced upon us by white America, justifies our demand for complete separation in a state or territory of our own.

5. We want freedom for all Believers of Islam now held in federal prisons. We want freedom for all black men and women now under death sentence in innumerable prisons in the North as well as the South.

We want every black man and woman to have the freedom to accept or reject being separated from the slave master's children and establish a land of their own.

We know that the above plan for the solution of the black and white conflict is the best and only answer to the problem between two people.

6. We want an immediate end to the police brutality and mob attacks against the so-called Negro throughout the United States.

We believe that the Federal government should intercede to see that black men and women tried in white courts receive justice in accordance with the laws of the land—or allow us to build a new nation for ourselves, dedicated to justice, freedom and liberty.

7. As long as we are not allowed to establish a state or territory of our own, we demand not only equal justice under the laws of the United States, but equal employment opportunities—NOW!

We do not believe that after 400 years of free or nearly free labor, sweat and blood, which has helped America become rich and powerful, that so many thousands of black people should have to subsist on relief, charity or live in poor houses.

8. We want the government of the United States to exempt our people from ALL taxation as long as we are deprived of equal justice under the laws of the land.

9. We want equal education—but separate schools up to 16 for boys and 18 for girls on the condition that the girls be sent to women's colleges and universities. We want all black children educated, taught and trained by their own teachers.

Under such schooling system we believe we will make a better nation of people. The United States government should provide,

free, all necessary text books and equipment, schools and college buildings. The Muslim teachers shall be left free to teach and train their people in the way of righteousness, decency and self respect.

10. We believe that intermarriage or race mixing should be prohibited. We want the religion of Islam taught without hindrance or suppression.

These are some of the things that we, the Muslims, want for our people in North America.

## What the Muslims Believe

1. WE BELIEVE in the One God Whose proper Name is Allah.

2. WE BELIEVE in the Holy Qur'an and in the Scriptures of all the Prophets of God.

3. WE BELIEVE in the truth of the Bible, but we believe that it has been tampered with and must be reinterpreted so that mankind will not be misled by the falsehoods that have been added to it.

4. WE BELIEVE in Allah's Prophets and the Scriptures they brought to the people.

5. WE BELIEVE in the resurrection of the dead—not in physical resurrection—but in mental resurrection. We believe that the so-called Negroes are most in need of mental resurrection, therefore, they will be resurrected first.

Furthermore, we believe we are the people of God's choice, as it has been written, that God would choose the rejected and the despised. We can find no other persons fitting this description in these last days more than the so-called Negroes in America. We believe in the resurrection of the righteous.

6. WE BELIEVE in the judgement, we believe this first judgement will take place as God revealed in America.

7. WE BELIEVE this is the time in history for the separation of the so-called Negroes and the so-called white Americans. We believe the black man should be freed in name as well as in fact. By this we mean that he should be freed from the names imposed upon him by his former slave masters. Names which identified him as being the slave master's slave. We believe that if we are free indeed, we should go in our own people's names—the black peoples of the earth.

8. WE BELIEVE in justice for all, whether in God or not, we believe as others, that we are due equal justice as human beings. We believe in equality—as a nation—of equals. We do not believe that we are equal with our slave masters in the status of "freed slaves."

We recognize and respect American citizenship as independent peoples and we respect their laws which govern this nation.

9. WE BELIEVE that the offer of integration is hypocritical and is made by those who are trying to deceive the black peoples into believing that their 400-year-old open enemies of freedom, justice and equality are, all of a sudden, their "friends." Furthermore, we believe that such deception is intended to prevent black people from realizing that the time in history has arrived for the separation from the whites of this nation.

If the white people are truthful about their professed friendship toward the so-called Negroes,



Honorable Elijah Muhammad

also, they can prove it by dividing up America with their slaves.

We do not believe that America will ever be able to furnish enough jobs for her own millions of unemployed, in addition to jobs for the 20,000,000 black people as well.

10. WE BELIEVE that we who declared ourselves to be righteous Muslims, should not participate in wars which take the lives of humans. We do not believe this nation should force us to take part in such wars, for we have nothing to gain from it unless America agrees to give us the necessary territory wherein we may have something to fight for.

11. WE BELIEVE our women should be respected and protected as the women of other nationalities are respected and protected.

12. WE BELIEVE that Allah (God) appeared in the Person of Master W. Fard Muhammad, July, 1930; the long-awaited "Messiah" of the Christians and the "Mahdi" of the Muslims.

We believe further and lastly that Allah is God and besides HIM there is no God and He will bring about a universal government of peace wherein we all can live in peace together.

Harriett Muhammad's advice-to-the-lovelorn column, "For and About You," has been a regular feature of the paper since November, 1963. Harriett was married to Elijah's son Akbar from 1960 to October, 1963. In September, 1961, she accompanied Akbar to Cairo, Egypt, where both attended schools. Their marriage was unsuccessful, and they returned to the United States and were divorced in October, 1963. Akbar went back to Egypt and married an Egyptian girl. Harriett, with hardly the best qualifications for her new job, immediately began her advice-to-the-lovelorn column. In June, 1964, columnist Harriett remarried. This time, she became the wife of a 27-year-old bigamist who had deserted a wife and three small children.

The third regular contributor to the cult paper, Abdul Basit Naeem, for the past eight years has written much in praise of Elijah Muhammad. Naeem began a new column, "Speaking of Business," in the January 29, 1965, issue of "Muhammad Speaks." Its purpose is to report on and furnish advice to Muslim businesses and to stimulate their use of the newspaper for advertising.

Naeem was born in India and entered the United States from Pakistan in 1953. In the Fall of 1956, he issued a bimonthly publication, "The Moslem World and the U. S. A." Through this little periodical, he said, he desired to impart information about Islam and to consolidate various orthodox Muslim groups in the United States. After including an article about the NOI in one issue, he was contacted by cult leaders. Being in dire financial straits,



Naeem published additional favorable articles on the NOI in exchange for considerable monetary assistance and a guaranteed increase in sales of his publication. Orthodox Muslims then stopped buying his publication and he devoted his attention to Elijah Muhammad and the NOI. Since then, Naeem, pretentiously claiming to be a "leading Pakistan Muslim and world lecturer," has written profusely for the cult paper extolling Elijah Muhammad and the NOI.

An editorial in the January 29, 1965, issue of "Muhammad Speaks" reveals the main theme and purpose of Elijah Muhammad's whole publicity program through the years:

"...we cannot get our freedom, justice and dignity from the American government without Divine help. It has been Divinely predicted that God alone would send a Messenger and that messenger is among us."

"...The slave is never able to free himself from the master without a guide. And that guide is the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, born to do just that."

But the "so-called Negro" needs prodding. Elijah's articles conclude with the urgent appeal: "HURRY AND JOIN ONTO YOUR OWN KIND. THE TIME OF THIS WORLD IS NOW AT HAND."

Elijah occasionally has had to change this "time" that he foretells, and once again he is warning in the above-mentioned issue of the paper:

**COLUMNISTS**  
for "Muhammad Speaks"



**Abdul Basit Naeem**  
"Speaking of Business"



**Harriett Muhammad**  
"For and About You"



**Tynnetta Deanar**  
"Women in Islam"

"America is falling. Her doom has come and none, said the prophets, shall help her in the day of her downfall.... What is going to happen in 1965 and 1966? It certainly will change your minds about following a doomed people--a people who hate you and your kind, and who call one who teaches the truth about them a hater. They are the producers of hatred of us. We are with God and the righteous."

## **B Exploitation of Negro Athletes**

Noted Negro athletes, with many admirers among members of all races, are exploited by the NOI to gain publicity for the cult. The NOI has been most successful in this regard with heavyweight boxing champion Cassius Clay.

Clay was known prior to his title fight with Sonny Liston on February 25, 1964, as the "great mouth" and "the impish chatterbox who dabbled in verse." Clay's "I-am-the-greatest" antics brought him considerable news coverage. On many occasions, he had been asked by the press about his reputed Muslim connections. During interviews at that time, he gave the impression that he was not a Muslim member, although he admitted his respect for the religion.

Then, the day after Clay's defeat of Liston, which greatly surprised the sports world, Elijah Muhammad announced to the annual Muslim convention in Chicago that Cassius Clay was a follower of the Muslims and had accepted him as the "Messenger of Allah." Elijah claimed that the reason Clay had not been defeated was that "Allah and myself said no." Clay then told the press that he had been a member of the Muslims for five years. But what events led up to this declaration by Clay?

Clay's own father, speaking earlier to the press about his son, said that the Muslims had been "hammering at him and brainwashing him" ever since he had won the Olympic light-heavyweight title at Rome in 1960.

Like many other Negro youths in Louisville, Kentucky, Clay had evidenced some interest in the Muslims, but he had also "marched for integration." Clay spent considerable time with cult leaders in Miami while training for a fight during the Fall of 1961. During 1962, with his younger brother, he attended several NOI functions in Miami and elsewhere. But little attention was paid to him by the NOI. In fact, the NOI was backing Liston and in "Muhammad Speaks," of February 18, 1963, printed an article captioned "Memo to Cassius Clay." The article supported what it called Liston's verbal haymaker, that Clay was "the youngest, fastest thing coming up--with his mouth," and referred to Liston as "the best thing that has happened to boxing since Joe Louis blazed across the fistic horizon."

Three straight victories in the ring by Clay during the first half of 1963, and Clay was gaining considerable attention in the press. Suddenly he became important to the Muslims. Malcolm X developed a close friendship with Clay. During the rest of that year, Cassius and his brother were introduced as "visitors" at several NOI temples; and the press throughout the country described Cassius' appearances at various public NOI functions. The interest of the press really became aroused in January, 1964, when Clay disappeared from Miami, where he had been training for his title fight, and appeared and spoke before a New York NOI rally. These were the events that took place before Clay became champion and that led to his open affiliation with the NOI.

With this new champion in his corner, Elijah decided it was time to honor Clay with a new name. On March 6, 1964, Elijah bestowed on Clay his "true" name, Muhammad Ali. Since then Muhammad Ali has not failed to stir up the publicity which Elijah so desperately seeks.

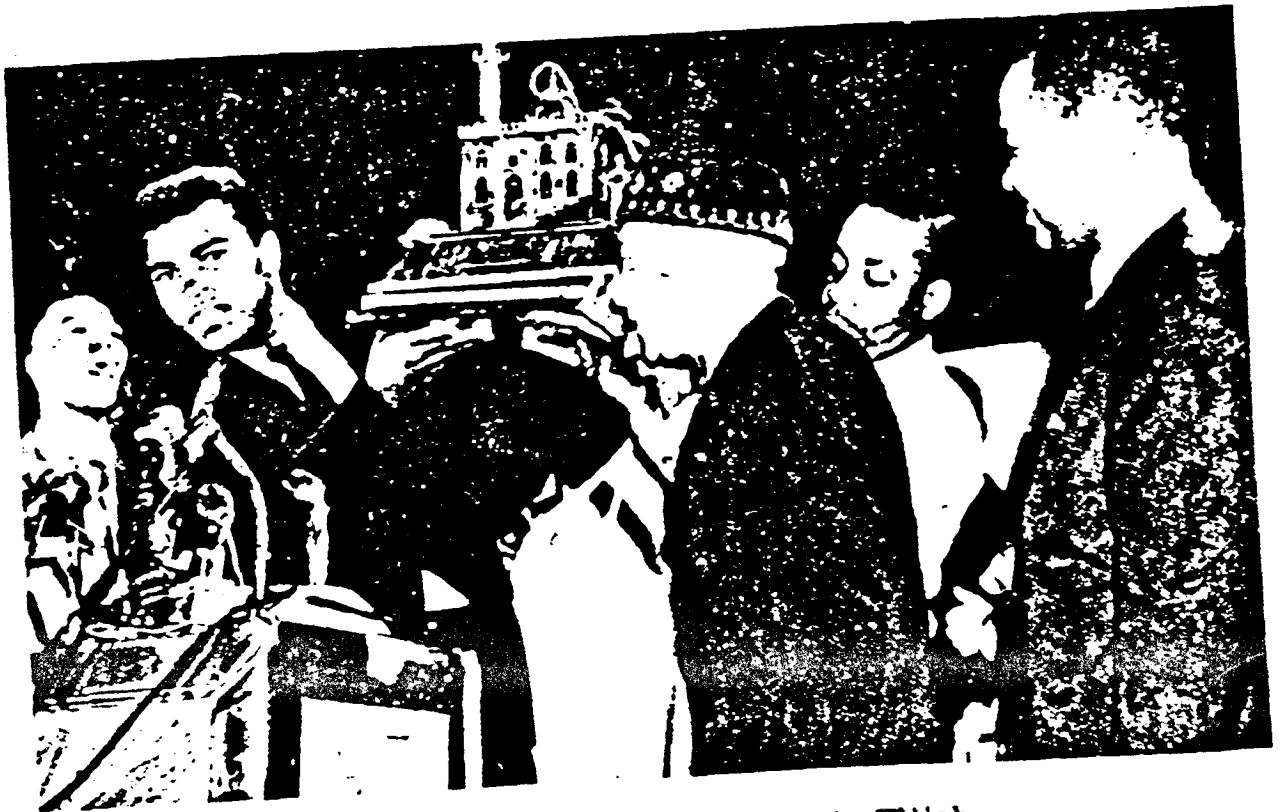
Although they may never find another Muhammad Ali, the publicity-seeking Muslims have not bypassed other Negro athletes. Professional football star Jimmy Brown and professional basketballers Bill Russell and Wayne Hightower have each been publicized in the cult paper for statements they made praising the Muslims.

#### C. Advertising

Elijah Muhammad has utilized various advertising media to publicize himself and his cult programs. With typical extravagant and exaggerated claims, he published a schedule in the first edition of "Muhammad Speaks" which listed 198 cities throughout the country where his weekly radio broadcasts could be heard. As is usual with Elijah's pretentious plans, his radio broadcasting too was beset by problems. Stations which began broadcasting his weekly taped speeches frequently cancelled the program after short periods of time because of complaints from listeners. Those stations which continued to carry his program often had difficulty obtaining new tapes and were obliged to repeat previous programs.



The Late Malcolm X Little



Cassius Clay Presenting Gift to Elijah

The actual value to Elijah of his radio broadcasting is hardly assessable. However, it is significant that the schedule continues to be set out in the cult paper and that frequently the list of stations carrying his programs and the list of cities reached reflect changes. The March 5, 1965, issue of "Muhammad Speaks" lists 31 cities which can receive Elijah's weekly broadcasts beamed from 19 radio stations around the country. Fourteen of the 31 cities are supposed to be receiving the programs from Station XERF, a Mexican radio station located just across the border from Del Rio, Texas.

Another advertising media tried by Elijah was beset with even more difficulties. Early in 1964, Elijah decided to utilize public transportation systems to carry signs advertising his programs. This plan proved expensive and disappointing to Elijah. Many transportation companies would not accept his advertising, others that agreed to carry the signs soon cancelled the program after receiving complaints from citizens and civic organizations in their areas.

When the transit program was begun early in 1964, the signs carried Elijah's picture and, in large letters, the challenge: "Read--Muhammad Speaks Newspaper." Below these words appeared the name of the local radio station and the time when Elijah's speeches could be heard. Later, after his economic program was devised, those companies still accepting his advertisements displayed pertinent new signs. Again, Elijah's picture drew attention, but the new



caption read: "Join Muhammad's 3 Year Savings Plan to Help Fight Poverty and Want--5335 So. Greenwood Ave. , Chicago, 15, Illinois. Buy 'Muhammad Speaks' newspaper."

Early in 1965, because of the expense and the lack of response, the transit advertising program was discontinued.

## IX. SECURITY MEASURES AND DISCIPLINE

### A. Security Measures

"It's for everybody's protection," explains the FOI guard to the visitor, who must be searched before entering an NOI meeting place. Negro reporters for the "Chicago American" told about their experience before a meeting got under way where Elijah was to speak. You are led into a room, they said, where you register with a smiling Muslim at a desk. Then you are conducted before a team of guards who begin to search you for dangerous weapons. They are gentle but thorough, covering hat to shoes:

"... A muscular young Muslim tells you to empty your pockets. Your ballpoint pen is clicked repeatedly to make sure it's not a miniature weapon. Anything objectionable in your pockets goes into a brown bag and you get a claim check to redeem it after the meeting.

"Then you're standing... arms thrust skyward. The muscular one takes a karate stance and commands you to 'move into me.' His fingers dart up to yours, then flick downward over your arms, across the top of your chest, under your armpits, and down your sides. The hands go inside and under your belt, all the way around.

"Then the probing fingers glide down your legs, inside and out. The Muslim slaps your thighs and hips, nods to three men standing silently behind you and mutters, 'O.K.' Then in a dull monotone, he apologizes for the frisk and hopes 'you're not offended.'"

Frisking for weapons as the standing line gradually moves up causes long delays. Men search men, women search women. After being cleared, the

visitor enters the meeting hall, where men sit on one side and women on the other. The speaker is surrounded by stern-faced, neat, young bodyguards standing at ramrod attention and facing the audience from fixed positions around the rostrum. Other FOI guards stare into the audience from side and rear positions or move soundlessly around the hall. At short intervals the guard changes. With appropriate salutes and a brief verbal exchange, those on duty are relieved.

Constant vigil is kept because Elijah and his leaders always suspect the presence of "stool pigeons" and "hypocrites." After years of cautioning the faithful to guard against "stool pigeons," Elijah now fears "hypocrites" even more than "stool pigeons." Since the cherished Malcolm X broke from Elijah, Elijah has constantly denounced him and others like him who once followed closely but later deserted.

Should a "stool pigeon" or a "hypocrite" gain entrance to a meeting or rally and be discovered, FOI guards immediately converge on him and forcibly eject him. During the 1965 Savior's Day convention, guards spotted a visitor who had formerly attended meetings and later spoken out against the NOI. Twenty or more FOI guards charged toward him and dragged him to the back of the hall. They beat him and kicked him unmercifully before he crawled out through the doorway, where police rescued him.

**B. Protection of Elijah Muhammad**

**Elaborate and showy security protection has always been provided for Elijah Muhammad by the FOI bodyguards. Much of this protection in the past undoubtedly was ceremonial and ritualistic evidence of his followers' respect for him as the "Messenger of Allah."**

Since early 1964, however, when Malcolm X and many other cult members left the NOI, the protection afforded Elijah has been very serious and complete. During the Summer of 1964, a new procedure was inaugurated to protect Elijah. Formerly, his escorts numbered into the hundreds. Confusion and shoving resulted when they attempted to enter buildings and automobiles. The new plan is for the supreme captain of the FOI and a selected few highly trained and trusted FOI men tightly to surround Elijah at all times. On either side of these bodyguards, a column of security escorts acts as the buffer guard. The FOI guards are constantly reminded that they are the soldiers of Islam, serving the greatest general, Elijah Muhammad, and that every "Fruit" must be willing to sacrifice his life for "the Messenger."

After the assassination of Malcolm in New York City on February 21, 1965, and subsequent threats by Malcolm's followers against Elijah and NOI property in Chicago, Elijah advised the press that he did not fear for his life; nevertheless, he welcomed the protection afforded him by the Chicago police.

When appearing at the annual convention less than a week after Malcolm's death. Elijah was additionally protected on the speaker's stand by a double row of NOI ministers sitting in front and on either side of him. This double row was in addition to the regular FOI guards facing the audience and standing shoulder to shoulder in front of the speaker's stand.

C. Discipline and Punishment

NOI members are constantly reminded that "the first law of Islam is obedience." Members are guided by a variety of "musts" and "must nots." Some of these are that they must regularly attend meetings, make the required financial contributions, sell their quota of the cult newspaper, and trade with Muslim-operated businesses. They must not smoke, drink liquor, eat pork, use narcotics, commit adultery, or associate with non-Muslims. Women members must wear the prescribed head covering, keep their homes neat, and serve the proper Muslim foods; and they must not wear lipstick, high heels, or short dresses. These rules are but a few of the many that have guided those who accept Elijah Muhammad's concocted version of Islam.

Muslims are warned that they must obey without question all orders of those in authority. Any member who violates the rules is subjected to disciplinary action administered by the NOI leadership composed of Elijah Muhammad, the national officers, the temple ministers, captains, lieutenants, and investigators.

When a member is "brought up on charges," he is given a trial, sometimes before a regular temple meeting, sometimes before only the temple officials. The penalty of the guilty depends upon the nature of the charge and varies considerably among temples. For a minor violation, a member may be suspended from all temple activity for a period from 30 to 90 days; or, if the charge is more serious, he may be suspended for one to five years.

A suspended member is not permitted to associate with other members or take part in any temple activities. Upon completion of his sentence, the member who shows the proper respect and promises to obey henceforth all Muslim rules is permitted to return to the organization. One member, although suspended for a year for having an affair with a woman other than his wife, took steps to ensure that he would be able to return at the completion of his sentence. He continued his regular monetary contributions and sent numerous recruits to his temple.

Except in certain isolated cases, the most severe penalty meted to violators of cult rules has been permanent expulsion from the cult. During the past year, however, the rise of dissidence among members influenced by the expelled leaders--Malcolm X, Wallace, and Hassan--has led to the cult's resorting to violent measures to punish those who have been slandering "the Messenger" and questioning his claim to be the last Apostle of Allah.

Throughout 1964, the cult paper regularly printed articles concerning hypocrites. A hypocrite, as defined by Elijah, is "one who first says he believes, then disbelieves, and seeks to oppose the Messenger and those who believe in him." During the first half of the year, Elijah's venomous condemnations were aimed at Malcolm X as the "chief hypocrite," and after Wallace and Hassan broke away from the cult in June, 1964, they too were denounced as hypocrites.

During June, the Chicago press was reporting on seven admitted dissident members of the Chicago NOI temple who complained that each one of them had been threatened with bodily harm by the Muslim goon squad. One of them already had been beaten by two FOI lieutenants. Other newspapers reported similar beatings administered to dissident members in both Philadelphia and New York.

Elijah grew concerned over the publicity regarding an increasing number of hypocrites. He called an emergency meeting of ministers and captains at Chicago on August 19, 1964. From many temples, they slipped secretly into Chicago to hear Elijah discuss how the problem of defectors, dissidents, and hypocrites should be met.

In Boston, just three days after this conference, a dissident member and his wife were beaten by FOI guards outside the Muslim temple. The day after that, two dissident male members were badly beaten by nearly a dozen

strong-arm men from the Boston Temple. One of these men, in an article in "The Saturday Evening Post," February 27, 1965, described their beatings as punishment for quitting and also as a warning "to keep our mouths shut."



## **X. NOI VERSUS LAW AND ORDER**

### **A. Contradictions**

Elijah Muhammad has publicly denied that the NOI teaches or advocates the use of violence or disobedience to the "white man's laws" in order to achieve its goals. This disclaimer has been repeated in public by the ministers of the various NOI mosques throughout the country. The same message of denial is carried in "Muhammad Speaks."

While this attitude toward violence and disruption is publicly enunciated, a more militant approach is actually pursued. Violent action to prevent police officers from entering NOI meeting halls and to avenge what is considered unprovoked police measures is condoned. In addition, obstruction of police and prison officials, excessive requests for freedom to practice their "religion" in prison, and deliberate violation of certain laws are actions supported by NOI leaders and members.

Black Muslim conflict with authority and with the law and order of our civil society has been particularly evident in the areas of police jurisdiction, prison confinement, and FBI investigations.

### **B. Police Jurisdiction**

Police departments in numerous cities have been involved in investigations pertaining to NOI representatives. The most publicized

incident in recent years occurred in Los Angeles on April 27, 1962, when police officers, in a routine investigation, stopped two men apparently selling clothes from an automobile. The officers were thereupon attacked by the suspects, who were NOI members, and by numerous fellow members who poured from an adjacent mosque. In the melee, shots were fired. One NOI member was killed, and other members and some of the police officers were wounded. The NOI immediately charged police brutality. NOI leaders and ministers, to exploit sympathy, have widely shown a photograph of the dead member lying on the pavement at the scene of the altercation.

Court proceedings against NOI participants in the fight have been extensive and undoubtedly did not end with an October, 1964, decision of the Second District Court of Appeals in Los Angeles that affirmed the prior convictions of 11 Black Muslims on charges of assault and resisting arrest.

Another incident took place in Rochester, New York, on January 6, 1963. Two police officers, dispatched to investigate a call that a man with a gun was on the second floor of a building, were halted at the street entrance to the hall in which the NOI was holding a meeting. The NOI guard was told the purpose of the officers' visit and, as the police went up the stairs, the guard shouted a warning upstairs. The officers were met and assaulted by several NOI members who responded to the guard's warning. Upon the arrival of another police officer with a K-9 dog, the members retreated into the hall,

where they were ordered to identify themselves to the police officers. Arrested were 15 NOI members, the majority of whom were visiting members from the Buffalo Mosque.

Four trials have been held as a result of these arrests. The first trial was terminated following picketing of the courthouse in which the trial was being held. The second and third trials resulted in deadlocked juries. Following new indictments returned by a grand jury, a fourth trial was held which ended in the conviction of the 15 members. All the defendants received four-year suspended sentences and were placed on probation for one year.

On October 27, 1963, three Flint, Michigan, police officers sought admission to an NOI meeting being addressed by Elijah Muhammad. NOI guards called on them to surrender their weapons before entering the hall, but the police refused to obey the NOI rule that only unarmed persons can enter their meetings. Elijah Muhammad then suspended the meeting. He later instituted a million-dollar damage suit against the police officers and the city attorney, charging that the constitutional immunities and guarantees of the NOI were violated by the police.

A Federal district court judge in July, 1964, dismissed the suit on grounds that the police had a legitimate right to enter the hall, that three police officers could hardly be considered too many when about 2,500 people

were in the hall, and that the suit was merely an assertion by Elijah Muhammad that the Constitution gives him the right to conduct a public meeting or religious assembly in a public place with the public invited, free from police supervision.

A Trenton, New Jersey, patrolman approached two Negroes on September 27, 1964, to issue them a traffic ticket for double-parking. The two Negroes, later identified as NOI members, knocked the patrolman to the ground, kicked him repeatedly, and attempted to obtain his revolver. A third Negro seized the revolver and ordered the NOI members to release the patrolman. A passer-by telephoned for police assistance. The two NOI members resisted arrest. In the attack, the patrolman suffered a fractured elbow and torn thumb ligaments.

One of the NOI attackers was found guilty of traffic charges of failing to obey a signal of a traffic officer, failure to show a driver's permit and an automobile registration, illegal double-parking, and failure to notify the Bureau of Motor Vehicles of a change of address. In February, 1965, the NOI members were indicted for atrocious assault and battery against the police officers.

### C. Prison Confinement

Individuals claiming to be Black Muslims and followers of Elijah Muhammad have created numerous problems for prison authorities in recent years. Some of the individuals involved were members of the NOI prior to

confinement, while others professed different religious affiliation on entering prison and later claimed conversion to the NOI.

The problems created by NOI practitioners in prisons, reformatories, and detention centers have included outright violence, as well as preparation of petitions or legal suits alleging authorities were denying them their constitutional right of religious freedom. One of the most significant court battles between prisoners and prison authorities has involved NOI members or sympathizers in District of Columbia penal institutions.

Members of the NOI were first permitted to conduct weekly religious meetings in District penal institutions in 1955. In 1959, a group of Muslims nearly rioted in a recreation yard at the Lorton Reformatory in Lorton, Virginia, where District inmates are incarcerated. Some time later, prison officials isolated a prisoner for preaching the NOI program to his fellow prisoners.

The NOI follower brought a suit in Federal district court in Washington, D. C., charging discrimination for not being allowed to practice his religion. In July, 1962, a district court judge ordered him to be returned to the area of general prisoners and to be permitted to practice his religion. In his decision, the judge indicated that NOI adherents embraced a legally recognized religion, since they believed in

a Supreme Being. The judge also stated that, while the prisoner deserved disciplinary action, the punishment given him had been excessive and was based principally on the fact that he had made complaints against District of Columbia officials.

Less than a month after NOI prisoners were granted permission to practice their religion, there were two riots in the Youth Center at the Lorton facility. Damage of several thousand dollars was caused by about 50 NOI followers and sympathizers. Prison authorities promptly banned further Muslim services in the Youth Center as dangerous to prison discipline and order. Services were still permitted in the adult section of the prison system, where NOI leaders were allowed to conduct services for the NOI inmates.

In 1964, a Federal district judge ordered District prison officials to permit NOI followers at the Youth Center to resume the practice of their religion. The order came in a ruling involving a suit filed by 15 NOI prisoners. The judge declared that to "justify the prohibition of the practices of an established religion at the Youth Center, the prison officials must prove by satisfactory evidence that the teachings and practice of the sect create a clear and present danger to the orderly functioning of the institution." There was no conclusive evidence offered, the judge held, to show that the 1962 riots had been instigated or led by members of the NOI.

The extent of this problem is revealed in statistics issued in June, 1963. At that time there were 183 legal petitions and 42 appeals by NOI prisoners pending in the Federal courts of Washington, D. C., and Virginia. NOI prisoners were termed a "cult of harassment" by District of Columbia officials, who declared that the volume of complaints was causing administrative and investigative backlogs that interfered with the normal work of the Corporation Counsel's office.

Typical of the complaints from Muslim prisoners was a charge that Lorton officials had not lived up to an agreement to grant special concessions during Ramadan, the Muslim's month of fasting. Actually, Ramadan is the ninth month of the Mohammedan calendar year; but, on account of the Mohammedan year being a few days shorter than the Gregorian calendar year, this fasting month occurs during various months of our year. For convenience, therefore, Elijah established that the month of December would be Ramadan for his followers.

Lorton officials were cooperating with Elijah's rule when they allowed Muslim inmates special mealtimes during December so that they would be served before sunrise and after sunset, as is the Ramadan custom. Mealtimes for the Muslim prisoners were based on sunrise and sunset tables of the United States Naval Observatory. In spite of this consideration, Muslim prisoners protested that it was not dark enough to eat at the designated times

because, according to Elijah's rules, there should not be enough light to distinguish between a black thread and a white thread.

In a study of 38 Muslims who were first permitted to hold religious services in District of Columbia penal institutions, authorities noted that each of the Muslim inmates violated prison rules sufficiently to warrant disciplinary action during his period of incarceration, whereas considerably less than half of an average group of prisoners ever committed violations that came to the attention of prison authorities. At the time of admission of these 38 inmates, 16 indicated Protestant religious preference; 10, Roman Catholic; nine, Muslim; while three indicated no religious preference. Thus, 75 per cent of these NOI members were recruited and trained during their confinement in jail.

While the legal proceedings concerning Muslim prisoners in District of Columbia penal institutions have not been ruled upon by the United States Supreme Court, that Court has been involved in a suit brought by a prisoner at the Illinois State Penitentiary who charged that he had been denied his constitutional right to practice his religion. The prisoner, sentenced in 1953 to two consecutive 100-year terms for two Chicago holdup murders, brought suit in July, 1962, in the Federal district court in Chicago alleging that prison officials prohibited him from buying and reading the Koran and Arabic language books and from seeing other inmates of his faith. Prison officials claimed that the prisoner was a troublemaker, who was isolated for several years for disciplinary purposes.



In December, 1962, the Federal district court in Chicago dismissed the suit on grounds that it pertained to a matter not within the court's jurisdiction. On appeal, the United States Court of Appeals in 1963 dismissed the complaint and held that the Black Muslim movement in this country was not a religion but a racist organization. Therefore, the court added, its members were not covered by the guaranty of religious freedom in the United States Constitution.

In June, 1964, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the prisoner's complaint had asserted a proper cause of action and should not have been dismissed by the appellate court. The latter court was ordered to conduct hearings to determine if prison officials had improperly denied the prisoner his constitutional right to practice his religion. A hearing in this case has been scheduled for 1965.

In addition to resorting to the State and Federal courts for permission to practice their religion, NOI prisoners have used other means to protest prison treatment. Several years ago, for instance, the leader of an NOI group of prisoners died from gunshot wounds received from a prison guard during a disturbance between white and Negro prisoners in the exercise yard of the San Quentin, California, Adjustment Center. The Center, a portion of the California State Prison, is reserved for incorrigible inmates.

The next day, about 70 Negro inmates assembled in the yard and refused to work. A spokesman presented to prison authorities several demands including segregation of NOI followers in the prison and a place for religious worship. The demands were denied and 59 of the protesting prisoners refused to go to work. However, after a brief period of isolation for these prisoners, they returned to work. Word of the disturbance at San Quentin apparently spread, as several days later, NOI leaders in California came to the prison to present demands for special privileges for NOI prisoners. Their demands were refused.

Much publicity is given to the contention that NOI members are taught to live cleanly and to improve themselves physically, spiritually, and morally. While NOI adherents in prison have sought freedom to practice their religion and to follow the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, the sincerity and depth of their convictions are sometimes in doubt. While in prison, a Muslim often asserts devotion to his religion and claims his religious rights are being denied by prison authorities. Then, released from prison, he may violate religious principles unscrupulously.

For example, an NOI member confined in a New Jersey State prison filed a suit alleging that prison authorities discriminated against NOI inmates. His suit reached the New Jersey Supreme Court, which has yet to render a decision in this matter. However, this prisoner was paroled and, in 1964,

while still claiming active NOI membership, he was arrested again, this time by New York City police, and charged with assault and battery, two narcotics violations, impersonating an officer, auto theft, possession of burglary tools, and concealing a dangerous weapon. He received concurrent sentences of five to ten years on two counts of attempted robbery.

#### **D. FBI Investigations**

During investigations of NOI members coming within the purview of FBI jurisdiction, information has been developed showing how NOI literature and speakers have fostered the impression that violation of United States laws is cause for suspension or expulsion from the NOI. The facts, however, refute this law-abiding pose.

Primarily, NOI members in conflict with Federal statutes are involved in alleged violations of the Selective Service Act. Among NOI leaders found guilty and sentenced to prison in the past for such violations are Elijah Muhammad himself, his son Wallace, and his son-in-law Raymond Sharrieff. In addition, numerous members have been investigated for similar violations.

NOI ministers give members confusing and contradictory instructions concerning Selective Service laws. The leaders remind NOI members that their allegiance is to the Muslim flag. They say that they cannot order members not to go to war, but that members should use their heads and decide for

themselves whether to go into the Army or to jail, that Elijah Muhammad served time for not going into the Army and no other NOI member is better than Elijah.

Bernard X, the NOI's youthful minister in San Francisco, decided he was "no better than Elijah." He refused to report for induction, as ordered by his local draft board. From November, 1961, until July, 1963, he served time in a Federal prison. Immediately following his release, he returned to his NOI ministerial duties.

In one case beginning in 1963, an NOI member was convicted for failure to appear for induction as ordered by his local draft board. He was placed on probation on condition that he seek "employment of national importance" within 60 days. However, he failed to do so and in 1964 was sentenced to prison for two years for violating that condition.

In another case, a self-admitted NOI member was sentenced in 1964 to two years in prison for failure to report for induction. He had originally registered in 1958 with a draft board in South Carolina and had been classified 1-A. In 1961, he requested to be classified as a conscientious objector, a request that was denied. He was ordered to present himself for induction in 1962 but he failed to appear. He was then transferred to a local draft board in New Jersey, where he had taken up residence. At a preinduction examination in that State, he was found acceptable for military service.

[REDACTED]

On two occasions in 1963, however, he failed to report for induction. His request for deferment to attend school was turned down. His case was transferred back to the South Carolina draft board in late 1963, and he was again classified 1-A. When he neglected to report for induction in early 1964, he was arrested by FBI Agents in New Jersey and refused to give a signed statement concerning his failure to report for induction. He informed a United States commissioner that he was an NOI member and would not submit to induction into the armed services for either combatant or noncombatant duty, because of his religious beliefs.

A Federal grand jury in South Carolina indicted the NOI member for violation of the Selective Service Act, but he consented to stand trial in New Jersey. On pleading guilty, he was given a two-year sentence.

Several years ago, John Ali, national secretary of the NOI, enunciated a policy governing NOI contacts with the FBI. He warned members not to sign any papers if requested by the FBI and to report immediately to NOI leaders if interviewed by FBI Agents.